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IN

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INTRODUCTION.

THAT quarter of the world which Geographers call Asia, is the immense continent which lies east of Europe, extending about 7,600 miles from east to west, and about 5000 from north to south.

The boundaries of Asia are exceedingly well defined, and obvious to those who undertake the perilous and fatiguing circuit of its limits, or the more humble, but at the same time, safer task of tracing them upon the map.

Let us take the latter course, and we shall find that its northern boundary is the Arctic Ocean —and that on the east, the Pacific. The southern is called the Indian Ocean, though it is in fact but an extension of the Pacific, whilst its western limit, proceeding from south to north, is the Red Sea, the Isthmus of Suez, the Mediterranean Sea, the Straits of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, the Black Sea, the Sea of Azof, the river Don, from its entrance into the last-named sea, and for a considerable part of its course—the river Wolga,

until it meets the great chain of mountains which separates Russia in Asia from Russia in Europe, and this chain, which is called the Ural Mountains, which runs north till it meets the Arctic Ocean, from which we began to trace the limits we have mentioned.

The reader, therefore, will understand from this that Asia is on the north, east, south and west, almost surrounded by water, the only land limit being that short isthmus which runs from the northern extremity of the Red Sea, to the shore of the Mediterranean, and the Ural range which runs from the river Wolga to the Arctic Ocean.

If we look at the southern boundary, which is called the Indian Ocean, it will be found that in several places, the shore is indented by several seas, gulphs, and bays, all of which, though still they are but parts of the great collection of water called the Indian Ocean, take a distinct name from the countries, the shores of which are washed by them.

The first of them, beginning from the west, is called the Arabian Gulph or Red Sea, dividing Arabia from Africa.

The second is the Persian Gulph, separating the north-eastern shore of Arabia from Persia.

The third is the Arabian Sea, which stretches from the south-eastern shore of Arabia to the western coast of Hindostan, and the western coast of the Birman empire.

The countries comprised within these limits *are various and* extensive. The impossibility,

however, of including all within so small a book, suggests the propriety of dividing this quarter of the World into three parts, each of which will be the subject of a separate volume, and so far will be complete in itself.

According to this division, the present volume will embrace the British possessions in the East, Hindostan, and the countries adjacent, Caubul, Nepaul, and the Birman empire, it will also comprehend the vast empire of China, which on account of its commerce with England, passing thro' the hands of the East India Company, is habitually associated in idea with our British dominions in Asia. These, taken together may be denominated South Eastern Asia.

South Western Asia comprises Persia, Arabia, the Holy Land, Turkey in Asia, and will form the subject of another book.

The third volume will contain an account of Russia in Asia which extends right across the whole Continent from its Western boundary to the Sea, and also of that vast district which is wandered over by the different tribes of Tartary, and separates Asiatic Russia from China, and the kingdom of Thibet, this would be properly denominated Northern Asia.

The characters here given are fictitious, and are introduced for the sole purpose of adding interest to the compilation; the reader, however may rest persuaded, that this is the only instance in which fact is departed from. The

married a well conducted young woman, whom he had known for many years, and who did not think his heart less honest because he wanted a limb: and to give her the justice she deserved, an exellent wife she made. Whenever George came home from a voyage, her welcome face was the first that greeted him as he stepped ashore, and when he was embarking for another voyage, *her* farewel was the last voice that he heard. In the intervals that he spent in Dublin between his voyages, none was so happy as Sally, nor was there in all the neighbourhood a husband more domestic than George; his room was always so neatly settled, his meals so comfortably dressed, and his wife's smile so cheerful, that he often said he knew no place so attractive as his own fire-side; "let others go to spend their money from home—perhaps many are foolish enough to think the public house a place of enjoyment; for my own part I never could see any thing in it at all to be compared to home. I like a glass of Grog too, and no one ever said George Walsh was sorry to see his friend take share of the best he had to give him; but there is no occasion for us to get drunk together to shew our gladness at meeting, nor can any one persuade me that a tap-room is half so good a place to welcome him in as my own snug lodging." In his younger days he had been giddy, like too many of his *messmates*, and whatever prize money was *coming to him*, or pay due when his vessel came *into port*, he could spend as thoughtlessly as

any one, and many a pound which he had earned in a hard gale, or by the capture of an enemy's vessel, had been squandered away most improvidently. He was taught better, however, by the following circumstance:—One day that the vessel was in harbour, he got leave to go ashore at Portsmouth, under a promise to the first Lieutenant that he would come off to the ship before dark—he drank to excess, got into a riot, and so far from keeping his word, he had been guilty of great insubordination to the midshipman who had command of the boat. —How many there are whom the love of drink has brought to ruin. Every one who knows the discipline which is kept up aboard a king's ship, must at once see that such an act could not be passed over. He was put in irons, tried by a court-martial, and but for his former excellent character and the exertions of his Captain, he would have suffered the severest punishment.—Forgiven, therefore, he firmly resolved that the enemy, as he called grog, should never get the weather-gage of him again, and he kept his word. He had been always a good seaman, but after this, his conduct was so exemplary, his diligence and attention so great, that he soon rendered himself a favourite with his officers, and through their kindness was allowed to take instructions from the school-master who taught navigation to the midshipmen; and so well acquainted did he become in a short time with every thing which a seaman should know, that he at length was promoted to be a warran

officer, and retained his situation till the amputation of his hand disabled him from further service.

The domestic history of persons in this class of life is soon told. As William, the son of this deserving couple grew up, he was sent to a neighbouring school, and having always before his eyes the example of his parents, and their guidance also, for they never let an opportunity pass of teaching him his duty to God and to his neighbour, he became distinguished amongst his comrades as an intelligent honest-hearted boy. At the age of thirteen his father took him a trip to Jamaica, to try how he would like the sea; but in truth it was more to see whether it would agree with his constitution, for living all his boyhood among ships on the quay, and always taking great delight in climbing the rigging, or paddling about in the river Liffey, when he was so fortunate as to see any of his father's friends, who would let him take a row in a yawl, it is not surprising that he preferred the sea to any other kind of life. On his return therefore, from his voyage, William was duly apprenticed aboard the same ship of which his father was mate, and there, under his father's eye, he, in the course of seven years for which he was bound, acquired a good knowledge of seamanship; and as he had always such a kind adviser near him, he escaped those dangers to which the young, sent so early from home, and too frequently left to themselves are often exposed.

In this manner things proceeded for some years—Sally always parting from her husband and son with tears, and welcoming them home with joy, (for it seems to be mercifully intended by the Almighty, that our sense of happiness should increase in proportion as it has been preceded by anxiety;) but at length they were to learn, that he who looks for uninterrupted enjoyment in a state which is to all a chequered scene of good and ill, will be grieviously disappointed. Sally had been always delicate, and it was only the comforts which Providence, in its goodness had bestowed on her, that prolonged her life to the age of fifty—she had always had a bad chest, and the changes in our variable climate, always affected her when she made the least freedom with herself in throwing off her warm clothing. She had accompanied her dear husband and son as far as the bay, and though perhaps it was but the same distress she had always felt when they left her, she often said afterwards she had a foreboding it was the last time she was to see them. "Don't be down-hearted, Sally," said George, as he gave her the last kiss, and helped her over the ship's side. "If it be the will of God that we should never meet again in this world, you know there is another port, where we may hope, through *his* mercy, to see each other after all our storms of life are over. Don't be uneasy for us, dear mother, cried William, you know the *little song* you always liked to hear: 'There is a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft to keep watch for the life of poor Jack.' And w'

should we not trust in God now as before," said he more seriously, as the blood mounted to his face, and Sally saw, or thought she saw a tear, in the corner of his eye; "this trip over, you know father has been long talking of laying himself up in dock for the remainder of his days, and though he has a long standing regard for our good ship George the Third, yet I hope to persuade him to make this his last sea voyage, and to stay at home with you in quietness and comfort for the rest of his days."

This was their simple and affectionate parting, and they all hoped that William's little plan of happiness would be realized, but it was otherwise disposed. It blew fresh, and was one of those chill November days which give us warning of winter, and it might have been that Sally exposed herself too much as she watched the vessel which was sailing from her with those she most loved on earth; but whatever was the cause, it is certain that she was almost immediately attacked by a pleurisy, which, although the Doctor removed it by copious bleeding, left her in such a weakened state, that she soon showed all the symptoms of a decline. "If it were the will of God that I should live till their return," as days and weeks passed over, and brought her nearer to the time when she might expect them, "I think I should die happy;"—however, infinite wisdom had otherwise decreed it. It is not necessary to mention all she suffered —*for there are very few* who have not at one time

or other witnessed the sure progress of consumption, when it has seized fast hold of the constitution. The cough, which shook her whole frame, and the unceasing pain in her side, had entirely deprived her of sleep for some nights, and wasted her away almost to a shadow; still her dissolution was not immediately expected, and there was even some hope that life might last for two, or even three weeks, before which, in all likelihood, her George and William would be returned; but just as the third week had passed, came on a tremendous gale—a severer gale has seldom visited our shores, and what still farther served to make her despond, it blew right down the channel, so that it was quite hopeless that the vessel in which they were could stand on its course against it. Anxiously did she watch the streamers of the vessels lying opposite her residence, and fearfully did she listen to the wind as it blew in violent gusts against the windows of her sick chamber, until at length, as she told a friend, who had attended her throughout her illness, and had listened with the most soothing kindness to all her wishes for their return she began to feel the truth of the wise man's saying, as she had read it in the Bible, that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." It was to this dear friend she confided her last message to those she loved, and it was with him she prayed, that through the merits of her Redeemer they might all be permitted to meet again in another and a better world, where there, no more pain, neither sickness nor crying, God himself wipes the tear from every eye

The person we have mentioned as receiving her last wishes, had in a short time an opportunity of communicating them to George and his son, for they arrived two days after her remains had been laid in the grave. It would be difficult to describe the bitterness of their grief. It was, indeed, a severe blow to both, for they had expected to find her as usual on the quay when they landed, and were some minutes ashore, before they learned the loss they had experienced. They gradually however, became more composed after they had minutely enquired into every particular of her illness and death, and had visited the humble spot that contained her remains. In this respect, indeed, they were so happy as to learn many of those little circumstances which affection loves to treasure up in the memory on such occasions, for Sally had been a universal favourite among her neighbours, and few there were who had not some little expression of her's about her husband and son to mention. But though time and religion, for both George and William were humble and pious Christians—though time and religion by degrees reconciled them to their loss, it was not easy for George to come to a determination as to his future proceedings. He and his son had often during their voyage out and home discoursed together upon the plan which has been already mentioned, and at last it had been resolved that the former should remain at home for the future, and live upon the little savings which he had been able to make, together with his Greenwich

pension, and a small annuity of £20 a year, which his merchant-employers had often told him should be the reward of his long and faithful services, whenever he desired to enjoy the ease and quietness so necessary to his years, for he was now in his sixty-fifth year—but his wife's death broke up all this—his partner was gone, his other hand, as he called her, had been taken from him, and though he no longer felt himself equal to the fatigues of a seafaring life, what pleasure could he find in remaining, when every thing reminded him of his loss. He had, however, another place which appeared to him the best under all circumstances; he had been hitherto an out-pensioner of Greenwich Hospital, that is, he had been allowed to receive his pension in Dublin, but it now occurred to him that if he could obtain admission as an intern pensioner, he would not want for society amongst his old shipmates, and might enjoy through the generous offer of his employers, many little comforts which increasing age had rendered necessary to him. This, therefore, was soon arranged—his former Captain, now Admiral Blisset, had been for some years Governor of the Hospital, and so great is the recommendation of a good character, that he even wrote to inform his old boatswain, that a vacancy having occurred, he had been found the senior applicant, and accordingly admitted, and also to assure him that he should hold the same rank among his invalid companions, and receive every indulgence which the rules of the place permitted. He also added

that his own son had lately been appointed to a new frigate, and as he was making up his crew, and understood that William was a prime seaman, if he chose to enter as a volunteer on board the Ceres, he might rely on his Captain's goodness, and on receiving such promotion as his merits should entitle him to. It is needless to say that both offers were gladly accepted: the father being proud at such condescension in his esteemed commander, and the son, like many young and enterprising seamen, having long wished to serve on board a man of war.

We might now entertain the reader with many events which happened in the course of the four years immediately preceding the year 1814, when the war having terminated, the Ceres was paid off, and her crew, amongst whom was William, discharged; we might describe some severe engagements which she fought with the enemy, and the coolness and bravery displayed by William in several of these trying occasions; but, however just or necessary war may appear to some, it may be allowed us to lament that the prevalence of Christian principles has not taught mankind a more Christian way of settling their differences. It will, therefore, be sufficient to state, that a very short time had elapsed from the time of William's joining his ship till he became a great favourite with his Captain; nor was this feeling of regard, as it may well be supposed, at all diminished, when William had an opportunity of saving his life in a desperate engagement which the British had with an enemy's ship.

The war, therefore, once over, and Captain Blisset seeing that there were no hopes of being soon employed, he resolved to fill up his time in travelling about, and extending his information; he had a very good fortune, was highly connected, and having offers of introduction to the Governor-General of India, hoped through his assistance, to procure those facilities for travelling through the continent of Asia, which would enable him to see it to advantage. Come with me, William, said he; as soon as I shall have made the necessary arrangement, I shall want a faithful steady companion, for I have plans in my mind which will be attended both with difficulty and danger, and you shall not be sorry that you turned landsman at my wish. I hope to travel over a great many wild countries before I return, and as I shall meet with barbarous tribes, very well disposed to take advantage of my situation, I wish to have the assistance of a cool head, and if necessary, a good pair of hands, such as I know your's to be. You shall not be my servant, but as you write a good hand, and don't want for sharpness, you shall be my companion, and if you must have an office, my secretary, though to say the truth, I shall most probably write my own letters. In the mean time you will be improving yourself; and if you like seeing foreign countries, will not, I think, find your situation disagreeable.

In this way, therefore, was William Walsh transformed from being Captain of the main-top aboard the Ceres frigate, into travelling com

panion and secretary of Captain Blisset. Nor if we could make the reader as well acquainted with him as we are ourselves, do we think the change would appear so extraordinary as it may at first seem. He was now in the prime of manhood, strong-built, active, and well-looking, and though he had passed so many years of his life at sea, his manners were neither rough nor boisterous; he had in his air that boldness which those persons acquire who pass much of their time amongst men—there was at the same time a respectful modesty, which accompanied his frankness, and shewed him to be a man of sense, and discretion.

It was agreed between Capt. Blisset and William, that the latter should take three months to visit his father at Greenwich, and his friends in Dublin, whom he had not seen for such a long time, after which he should be ready to enter upon his new situation. I shall be kept busy, said Captain Blisset, during this period, in procuring the necessary permission from the East India Company, without whose license, no one is allowed to remain in their Eastern possessions; and also in furnishing myself with the introduction, which I shall want for the Governor-General, so as to be able to sail about the middle of July; at what port we may land, I have not yet determined, but as I go out solely to increase my stock of information, I shall, of course, be pretty much decided by that consideration in my proceedings.

We shall not detain the reader by describing William's journey to Dublin, or the joy which George experienced at the sight of his son, when he came to him in Greenwich; nor the filial sentiments with which the latter returned all his affection; he was still the same hale old man as when he left Dublin; a few more wrinkles there were in his brow, and a less firm step, but it was only William that could see them—for to the eye of casual observation, his bodily powers had experienced no alteration. His heart was the same as ever; and as he approached nearer and nearer to the grave, he grew more and more fond of serious conversation, and dwelt more frequently upon the prospect of being reunited to his departed wife. This but increased his habitual cheerfulness, and made him increase in watchfulness, that the chief enemy should not come upon him by surprise—The hours flew so swiftly in his son's society, that it seemed but a couple of weeks, when the appointed day for their separation arrived, and it became necessary to part. We pass over the scene that took place, for description could not do justice to their feelings—suffice it to say, that William was not ashamed of his tears, as he shook his old father by the hand, and that George prayed to Him, who is the Giver of every blessing, that his influence might guide, and his arm protect his son through every situation of life into which he might be called.

At the time fixed on, William met his patron in London, having previously furnished himself

with such articles as he might require; but here an unexpected pleasure awaited him. It was at this time that the Persian Ambassador, after having remained for some time in England, was about to return to his own country, and as it was necessary to treat him with every distinction, a man of war was directed to carry him out, and a person of rank appointed to accompany him, until he landed on the continent of India, as an additional mark of respect. The individual chosen for this office was no other than Captain Blisset, and thus was he enabled to enter upon his travels under the most favourable auspices, and with advantages which few, travelling as private individuals at their own charge, could hope to enjoy.

It was on the 18th of July, that the Asia, 64 guns, set sail from the Downs, with the Persian ambassador, and eight servants aboard, Capt. Blisset and also William Walsh. On the 21st, they lost sight of the Lizard Point the most southerly point of England, and after an agreeable passage of eleven days, reached the islands of Madeira, lying to the west of Africa. On the 11th September, they made the coast of South America; it was amusing, however, to hear the Persians, who had been called on deck, to look at the new world, express their disappointment at beholding nothing but common land and common trees, the name new world having led them to suppose that it was *altogether unlike* the old.

Steering south from the coast of Brazil, they soon got into the trade wind, and had a fresh gale, which carried them for four days considerably to the south, and here the weather became so very cold, that they were obliged to add to their bed clothes, and take to their winter clothing. Hence, their course lay eastward to the southern promontory of Asia.

But it was not likely that the voyage should possess much interest to any aboard—to the Ambassador and his train, it was irksome in the extreme, for the Persians have a rooted antipathy to the sea; even William, though always ready to take the helm, or to put his hands to a rope when assistance was wanting, used to feel his time hang heavy and unoccupied, so true is it, that they are the happiest whose hands are busy. On the 20th October, at two o'clock, A. M. Capt. Blisset was awakened by William informing him that they were in Table Bay, the harbour of the Cape of Good Hope, which is the southern promontory of the continent of Africa. The Cape had been visible from the mast head, from the middle of the preceding day, and its appearence now in the bright moonlight, had a very fine effect from the deck. Here they landed before breakfast, and employed the few days that the ship remained, for the purpose of taking in water, in making an excursion up the country, in company with the Ambassador, who was received with due honour by the Governor. On the 5th November, they again embarked, and having

soon after got into the monsoon, or trade wind, they proceeded for some time without any remarkable occurrence.

Shortly after passing the Cape, every one aboard was awoke at day-break by a cry of fire, and it may well be supposed that neither Captain Blisset nor William was the last on deck to assist in extinguishing it. The Persians also, were ready to give their help, but their extreme timidity and dislike to the sea, made them so awkard and inefficient, that the Captain was obliged with but little ceremony to send them below and shut them up in their own cabin. Let the reader reflect, how dreadful is the situation of those, exposed in the middle of the wide ocean to this destructive element. On shore, a man may hope to escape from a burning house. At sea, if shipwrecked on a desolate island, he is thankful to Providence for his presevation, and like Robinson Crusoe, soon learns to make the best of his situation, but to be in the midst of flames on the ocean, many hundred miles from land, in momentary expectation of the gunpowder, which these large ships of war always carry for the use of their cannon, taking fire, and blowing the vessel to atoms, or of gradually burning to the water's edge, and then foundering, these apprehensions make even the stoutest tremble. Providentially, however, they were not long kept in suspense: every one aboard, with the exception of the Persians, acted with calmness and intrepidity, and in less than an hour the flames were completely got under.

During the calms which they met soon after in the middle parts of the Globe, the sea was as smooth as glass, and every floating substance thrown over board remaining round the vessel, they were often obliged in the cool of the evening to lower the boats and tow her to some distance. This alternation of stiff breezes and calm weather continued for six weeks, so that when the town of Cochin, on the coast of Malabar was discerned from the deck with telescopes, their supply of water was actually reduced to one cask; it may easily be imagined, therefore, how rejoiced was every one a-board, as they slowly approached the cocoa-nut groves, which seemed to rise from the ocean on the low sandy shore near the town of Cochin, where they anchored in the evening.

After remaining two days at Cochin, in order to take in water, cattle, poultry, fruits, and vegetables, luxuries which those alone know the value of who have been for a long time cooped up in a vessel, and living for weeks on salt provisions, the vessel sailed for Bombay, which, lying north of Cochin, on the same western coast of the Peninsula of Hindostan, the vessel was able to keep so close in shore, that the coast was always visible from the deck. On the last day of the year they cast anchor in the harbour of Bombay, which is an island lying on the western peninsula of Hindostan, and is in fact the capital of the whole line of British settlements on that side, having completed a voyage of 18,589 miles in the space of five

months, thirteen days, an average nearly of 112 miles in the twenty-four hours.

But here it is necessary to inform the reader, that this was not always the course pursued by those who wished to reach India from Europe. So recently as the year 1493, the year after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, the route lay up the Mediterranean Sea to Alexandria, in Egypt, across the isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea, and then either across the desert of Arabia, or by water, through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, but in that year the southern point of Africa, now called the Cape of Good Hope, was descried by Bartholemew Diaz, a Portuguese, who penetrated farther in this direction than any voyager before him; though, deterred by tempestuous weather, he was fearful of attempting to penetrate farther south, for he did not know that, doubling this point, nothing opposes the navigator's course to India. In four years after, however, the important fact was satisfactorily ascertained, and the name of the Cape of Tempests which Diaz had given to it, was changed into the more auspicious one of Cape of Good Hope. The King of Portugal also equipped a fleet, which was sent out under the command of Vasco de Gama, who in a short time surmounted all the difficulties which had deterred his predecessors, for he rounded the continent of Africa, and led his European fleet, for the first time, into the Indian Seas. It is a curious fact, however, that though the Portuguese frequently touched at

Table Bay, in the voyages to and from India, they never thought of forming any permanent settlement there. In the year 1600, the Dutch fixed upon it as a station for their vessels, but it was not for fifty years after that they began to colonize it, and extend their authority into the interior. At present, the Cape of Good Hope belongs to the British, and as it pretty nearly divides the voyage from Europe to India into two equal portions, it naturally forms one of the great land marks of the globe, as well as a halting place for vessels bound to the East Indies from Great Britain.

When the novelty of the objects before him had, in some degree, worn off, William, under Captain Blisset's kind instructions, set himself to learn every thing connected with the island, that was remarkable.

Bombay, which lies in lat. 18 58 north, and 72° 38′ east, stands upon a small island, separated from the western coast of the peninsula of India by a narrow strait, and is one of a cluster of six small islands, which form together one of the most safe and commodious harbours in the world, approachable at all times, and affording a safe anchorage during the most tempestuous seasons. Near the southern extremity of the island stands the lighthouse, which rises to the height of 150 feet above the level of the sea, and shews its light at the distance of twenty-one miles. Its markets are supplied from the neighbouring island of Salsette, and from the continent, with all the

necessaries of life; for though the people are industrious, and every spot that will admit of cultivation is sown with rice, or planted with cocoa nut trees, still so rocky is the soil, that in one year it does not produce food sufficient for the consumption of six weeks.

The city is about a mile in length, and a quarter of a mile in breadth. It is surrounded by fortifications, being a place which, in time of war, an enemy would be most likely, from its situation, to seek to gain possession of. In the centre of the town is a large open space, called the Green, which is surrounded with many large well built houses. On one side stands the Bazar, which is crowded and well supplied with all kinds of merchandize and provisions. It is the residence also of the native merchants. The Europeans hold their counting houses in town— but business once over, they resort to elegant and comfortable villas.

The population of the whole island of Bombay is 220,000 souls, of whom about 170,000 are Hindoos, and the remainder made up of Parsees, Mahometans, Jews, and British; and it will give some idea of the rapid advance which it has made in prosperity, that Charles II. about 140 years ago, granted it to the East India Company at the rent of £10 annually, payable at the custom-house in London; and so lately as fifty years ago, it was described by *a learned foreigner* as having within the twenty *preceding years* increased from 70,000 to *140,000 inhabitants.*

The ambassador was received with great distinction by the governor of Bombay. Previous to landing, also, a number of Persian merchants came on board, and brought with them, according to the custom of their country, presents of all sorts of fruit. But that which gave him most pleasure, was the receipt of a royal decree, by which his sovereign conferred on him the title of Khan, which means prince, and expressed his entire approval of his conduct in England.

Shortly after their arrival, Captain Blisset had to arrange the ceremonial to be observed when the ambassador should return the governor's visits—the Persians attaching great importance to these forms, and valuing them just in proportion to the parade and show, which were exhibited to them. On entering the fort, accordingly, he found the streets lined with soldiers, who saluted him as he passed, with the Indian salutation—Prosperity attend you. Two pages in red and gold walked by his side, driving away the flies with large bunches of feathers, and several men with massive silver sticks walked before him with a stately air. The governor himself was at the door of his residence to receive him: and frequent discharges of artillery, and the sound of military music increased the effect of a scene, which evidently gave much satisfaction to him whom it was intended to honour.

As we do not propose to do more than give a very rapid sketch of William's travels, we must refer the reader to a little book, called the

History of Remarkable Trees, for a description of the cocoa-nut tree, which grows in such abundance in these parts of India, and is converted to no less than three hundred and sixty uses, furnishing the inhabitants with cordage, timber for ship-building, a fermented liquor called arrack, vinegar, oil, sugar, milk, food, paint, and all kinds of domestic utensils. The same little book will also give a full description of the banyan tree, which is called the wonder of the vegetable world, and grows in great luxuriance in the eastern climates. This is the tree that throws out from its branches fibres which, in time, strike into the ground, and become parent stems, so that it resembles an immense grove, although it is, in fact, but one tree.

It happened that at this time, a dry season of unusual length had set in, which gave our travellers an opportunity of remarking how little their countrymen at home are sensible of the goodness of Providence, in giving to them that alternation of sun-shine and rain, which clothes the ground with such abundant verdure. In Bombay, the burning heat of the sun soon changed the colour of the grass to a burnt hue, from which the abundant dews, which fall at night, were unable to recover it. "Here," said Captain Blisset, "we learn the force and beauty of those descriptions of fertilizing streams and refreshing showers, which occur often in the Holy Bible." When rain is withheld, the heavens are said to be as brass, and the earth as iron; but when it falls on the thirsty soil, the

language is equally powerful—"Thou visitest the earth and blessest it; thou makest it very plenteous; thou waterest her furrows, thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof; thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness—and thy clouds drop fatness."

As the heat is so very great in India, various are the methods had recourse to for moderating its violence; and our travellers had reason to admire the ingenuity of human invention. The houses of the wealthy are built with thick walls to resist the heat: and every door and window shut to exclude the air; or if open, screens of matted grass are hung up before them, kept constantly watered—for it is found, that as the hot air dries them up, the evaporation of the moisture produces a refreshing coolness. For the same reason, jars of porous earth full of water are suspended in the current of wind; and the various liquors which they use as drink, are wrapped up for some time before they are brought to table, in a cotton cloth, kept constantly wetted.

The native inhabitants of Bombay, and they resemble the other Hindoos who reside on the continent, are generally of a dark tawney colour, of the middle stature, slight made, and well proportioned, with black eyes and hair, and a mild expression of countenance. Among their good qualities, their obedience to superiors: resignation in misfortune: charity and

hospitality: filial and conjugal affection, deserve to be mentioned, for they might, in these respects be held up as examples to many who think themselves far before them in civilization. They are also extremely sober, drinking only water, milk, and sherbet; and none but those of the very lowest order are ever seen in a state of intoxication. They eat morning and evening; and as from religious scruples, they never feed on any thing that has had life; their cooking utensils are very simple—their plates and dishes are generally formed from the leaf of the plantain tree, or the white lily, and are never used a second time.

The men shave the head and beard, but leave the mustachios on the upper lip, and a small lock of hair on the head. The higher class wear turbans of fine muslin of different colours, encircled with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, and a long gown of white calico, which is tied round the middle with an embroidered sash. Their shoes are of red leather, or English broad cloth, sometimes ornamented, and always turned up with a long point at the toe. Their ears are bored and adorned with large gold rings; and on their arms they wear bracelets of gold or silver. The princes and nobles are adorned with pearl necklaces and gold chains, to which clusters of costly gems are suspended. The inferior classes are rather darker in complexion; their dress generally consists of a turban, short cotton vest and drawers; but some we only a turban, and a cloth round the waist;

hough the poorest usually contrive to purchase a silver bracelet for the arm.

But that which excited most surprise in William, was the early age at which the Indian women are marriageable; and the rapidity with which their beauty decays. They are mothers at twelve years of age, and grandmothers at five-and-twenty. "Yes," said Captain Blisset, when William mentioned his surprise, "it is an early time of life to have the cares of a family; and early also to feel the approaches of old age. But you will observe the consequence.—When they are most handsome they are children in sense—and when they come to acquire sense, their beauty is gone:—though from the little education they receive, and the retired manner in which they are made to live, I don't think they can be very well informed companions at any time: they know little of the world—even the highest in rank receiving no instruction, even in reading or writing, and not being permitted to eat with their husbands or brothers, or to associate with strangers. And yet they shew a most affectionate disposition. They are promised in marriage generally at the age of four or five. The bride afterwards sees her husband as a play-fellow, and about eleven she is conducted with great ceremony to his house, and enters upon the duties of a wife, and the mistress of a family. Should the boy die during this interval, the girl remains a widow for life; she has her head shaved, and divests herself every ornament. When the husband is abs

from home for any length of time, they seldom wear their jewels, since the person they most wished to please, is no longer in their presence."

As far as the climate admits, the English fashions in houses, equipages and dress, are generally adopted amongst the European residents at Bombay. The domestic servants are seldom Europeans—the ladies being better served by young females from the coast of Malabar; and the men by negro, or Malay boys, trained by themselves. The India clerks and writers attached to the commercial establishments of the East India Company, are Hindoos, and possess all the good qualities of trust-worthy men; being much attached to their employer, careful of his interest, accurate in their accounts, and what is very singular, such exact imitators of his handwriting, when it is their business to transcribe his letters, that it is often difficult to distinguish between the original and the copy.

From the situation of Bombay, it commands an extensive commerce with the countries situated in the Persian and Arabian gulfs; with the rest of Hindostan, and also with the islands in the eastern ocean, and with China.—With Europe also, and with different parts of America, it carries on a considerable trade, so that in fact, though but an inconsiderable spot, it may be said to trade with the four quarters of the globe.

The Parsees, whom we have already mentioned, are descendants of those who being driven out of Persia by the Mahometans, in the seventh century, settled in Guzerat; and th

more than one thousand years have elapsed since, they are a distinct people, contracting no marriages with the Hindoos. Some of those who have settled in Bombay, are the richest individuals on the western side of India. Others of them quit Guzerat, where they leave their families, and settle in Bombay for a few years, as ship-wrights, a trade in which they excel, saving their wages carefully, until they have got together a sufficient sum to go home and set up a trade for themselves. Indeed there was nothing struck William so much, as to see a number of ship-wrights in white muslin dresses, working upon a vessel which they were then building.

Before their departure from Bombay, William attended his master to an evening party, at the house of one of the principal Parsees, named Pestengee, and was here able to form some idea of their great wealth; the females were loaded with ornaments. Pestengee's grandson, a child of seven years old, with his little wife two years younger, appeared with strings of pearls as large as hazel-nuts, besides five or six long rows of the size of peas, given to them on their marriage, which had taken place a few months before. On that occasion, the expense incurred was computed at twelve thousand pounds—the streets were carpeted and canopied with cotton cloth; confectionary and fruits were scattered among the populace; processions and fire-works were continued through the night; the Bazar was illuminated, and valuable gifts distributed amongst the poorer

relations of the parties; and the little bride and bridegroom were borne along on an ornamented palankeen, covered with jewels, preceded by banners and musical instruments, and followed by crowds of people. Pestengee's grandfather had come from Guzerat to Bombay, a day-labourer; but industry and good conduct are rewarded in Bombay as well as in Great Britain and Ireland, thought William as he listened to this account from a serjeant in one of the English regiments quartered there, who had witnessed the bridal ceremony. Let it not be supposed, however, that the fortunes amassed by the Parsees, are all spent in parade and feasting. In the famine which desolated India in 1806 and 1807, a Parsee merchant fed five thousand poor persons, daily, for three months; besides other liberalities to the starving people.

Another instance of the success that seldom fails to await honest industry, is found in the history of him who is now at the head of the government dock-yards. Previous to 1735, there were no docks at Bombay, the principal ship building station being at Surat. at that time, however, the British agent had such reason to be satisfied with the foreman, named Lowjee, that he tried to persuade him to settle in Bombay, to superintend the ships which he intended to have built there. The attachment and fidelity of this Parsee, however to his master, could not be shaken by their offers, and he refused to close with them until his permission was obtained. Since that time, the

history of the dock-yards has been the history of Lowjee's family, all of whom acted so uncorruptedly in the discharge of their duty, that they have been continued from father to son for five generations. In 1771, Lowjee introduced his two grandsons into the yard, but determining that they should learn their profession practically, he made them work as common carpenters at so much per month.

These two were succeeded by their two sons, Bomagee and Tamgee, who carried on the business with as much credit as their ancestors, and their success was so great in building a frigate, that the British Admiralty ordered several to be laid down. They intended, at first, to have sent out a European builder, but the merits of Bomagee and his brother, recommended them so much, that they were placed over the dock yards, as master-builders. By them, were built, four seventy-four gun ships, two thirty-eight, two thirty-sixes, besides twenty-five merchantmen, from 1000 to 600 tons burden, &c. and some smaller craft.

What an instance, thought William, of the effects of a good example, and how strongly does it prove that a good name is the best possession a man can leave to his children.

During their stay at Bombay, Captain Blisset accompanied by William, made an excursion to the island of Elephanta, which is about two leagues distant, and is celebrated for its remarkable caves, cut by manual labour in the rock. They found it did not exceed three miles

In circumference, and consisted of two rocky mountains and a small valley of rice fields between, cultivated by a few Hindoo farmers.—Near the landing-place stands the figure of an elephant, the size of life, which probably gave its name to the island.

Ascending the mountain by a narrow path, they soon arrived at a snug cottage occupied by a Serjeant of Veterans, who had been placed there by the English Government to take charge of the Cave and the figures. The former is a great chamber or cavern hollowed out in the rock so as to leave four rows of massive columns standing, which appear to support the roof; they are uniform, and placed at regular distances, and form three magnificent avenues—the whole being 220 feet long and 150 broad; at the upper end of the apartment is an immense figure reaching nearly from the floor to the roof, a height of fifteen feet—in one of the hands of which is a large Cobra di Capelle serpent, while the other contains fruits, flowers, &c. On each side of this figure is a gigantic statue of a man leaning on a dwarf. Think said Captain Blisset to his attendant, what time, labour, and ingenuity it must have required to cut away the rock, inch by inch, leaving only these huge figures and pillars standing, and observe how very rich the carving is on the tops of these columns and along the sides of the cave.

Having thus satisfied his curiosity, at Ele*phanta, Captain Blisset* resolved to see the

similar excavations in the island of Salsette, which is connected with Bombay by a causeway. The party consisted of five gentlemen and himself, and a numerous retinue of attendants, who were obliged to carry beds, provisions, and every thing wanted. The great temple, like the one already described, is hollowed out of the rock, being upwards of ninety feet long, thirty-eight feet wide, and proportionably high, with a fluted concave roof. It is divided into three aisles by two rows of columns; at the extremity of the middle aisle, which is the broadest, is a huge circular pile of rock, nineteen feet high, and forty-eight feet in circumference. In this temple, the party found no images, nor any kind of Sculpture, except on the capitals of the pillars, which are generally finished in a masterly style, and, what is very extraordinary, are but little impaired by time; on the top of some is a figure like a bull between elephants, horses, lions, and animals of different kinds.

After remaining some hours in the large temple, the party proceeded further up the mountain, by a flight of steps, hewn in the rock and continued to the summit. These steps led to smaller excavations, most of which consist of two rooms, a portico, and benches cut in the rock, to each also was annexed a cistern of water of about three cubic feet, also hewn in the rock, for the preservation of rain water. And may I ask, to what use these excavations were applied, said Captain Blisset, to an elderly

gentleman who formed one of the party, and indeed, had accompanied them rather as a guide than to satisfy his own curiosity. It is the opinion of some, replied he, that all these excavations formed a great city, containing many thousand inhabitants, and that the largest temple was their place of worship, whilst the smaller ones were the dwelling places of the people, according to their respective ranks in society: but the more received opinion is, that these chambers were the abodes of the priests who officiated in the temple, and that the circular figure was the idol they worshipped.

During the stay of the party at Salsette, William was the means of saving the life of a poor child, whom a tiger had actually seized, and was carrying off, when he fired the carbine which he carried, and obliged it to let fall its prey. Indeed from the number of these animals, which infest the mountainous parts of the island, and often descend into the plains, such accidents frequently occur. The infant had been seized by its little dress of cotton, so that it received no injury except a few scratches from the bushes, through which the animal was bearing it off, when the shot obliged it to let go its intended victim.

Having a great wish to see Surat, and the Ambassador not requiring his attendance, Captain Blisset and William took the advantage of an English vessel which was bound to that port, and had only touched at Bombay,

to make arrangements for taking a freight thence, on its return. The wind was favourable, and they arrived at their destination in less than forty-eight hours, but were obliged to cast anchor, in Swallow Roads, at the mouth of the river Taptee, on the banks of which Surat is built. It is the chief town of the Province of Guzerat, and was formerly a place of great trade. Since the rise of Bombay, however, it has much declined, though it still contains above 70,000 inhabitants. The village, where our travellers disembarked, is called Domâs, and there they procured a carriage to convey them to the city. It is fortified with a brick wall, and from the numerous gardens and spacious squares, covers so great a space, that Captain Blisset was two hours and a half walking round them.

It has been already said, that the religion of the Hindoos does not permit them to eat animal food; however they carry their tenderness for living creatures still further. In Surat there is no hospital for human beings, but there is an extensive establishment, of this nature, for sick or maimed animals. When any one turns out an old horse, or any other domestic animal, as useless, the Indians voluntarily assume the care of it, and place it in this house, which is full of infirm, decrepid cows, sheep, rabbits, hens, pigeons, &c. Our travellers saw also in it a great tortoise, which was blind and helpless, and as they were told, 125 years of age. May

the Indians keep even a physician, expressly for the purpose of attending these animals. I think Sir, said William, this is a great abuse of charity. It is, replied Captain Blisset, though it certainly, originated in a compassionate feeling for the brute creation; and though the money thus expended, might be much better applied, it strikes me, that the other extreme, of destroying animals, that are no longer useful, or leaving them to perish, is more reprehensible.

When the religion of the country prescribes to the people the use of vegetable food only, it may well be supposed that a great source of luxury and expense is cut off; in fact a Hindoo will live upon a pennyworth of rice daily; so that it would be difficult for him to indulge his taste for splendour, in any other way than in his dress and equipage, and certainly both are of the most costly description. The hackery which is a kind of covered waggon, is of simple, and to an European eye, of inelegant construction; but it is in the oxen which draw it, that the Indian nobleman lavishes his money, a pair of white oxen will cost him 600 rupees, whilst, in adorning the points of their horns with silver, and in their trappings, a considerable sum in addition is lavished.

The citizens of Surat display their magnificence, likewise, in their palanquins. This is a sort of couch, suspended upon a bamboo, and borne by four men. The traveller reclines in this, and is shaded from the sun by a curtain; a palanquin, completely ornamented with silver

covered with rich stuffs, and suspended upon a handsome bamboo, properly bent, will cost above 200 pounds sterling. The bamboo, alone, of the Governor's palanquin, exclusive of the other ornaments, cost 125 pounds. The bearers of the palanquin, and Indian servants wear no clothes except a small linen cloth about their loins, with close flat bonnets on their heads. [See frontispiece.] At Surat, the day is reckoned from sunset to sunset, and is divided, not into twenty-four hours, but into sixty garris, each garri being twenty four minutes.

On the 30th January, Captain Blisset returned from Surat, and resumed his attendance on the Persian ambassador. This, however, did not long continue, for in a fortnight after, the latter set out on his return to Persia, the Captain having made all necessary arrangements for his accommodation. He had invited his English friends to accompany him, in his overland journey homewards, promising them all the advantages which his knowledge of the country and influence could give; but Captain Blisset had already resolved on deferring his visit to Persia, until he should have seen whatever was remarkable in Hindostan, and the countries adjacent. With many expressions, therefore, of gratitude, he declined this proffered kindness, resolving however, to avail himself of it, when returning from India to Europe, and having taken leave of him, now turned his attention to the object of his voyage, namely that of enlarging his sphere of observation. We hav

already mentioned the high recommendations with which he was furnished, when leaving London, and the mission, on which he had been employed, was not likely to lessen the kindness which these letters of introduction procured him; nor was it merely in obtaining civilities from those in office, that they proved useful. The Governor of Bombay was about to send despatches to Ceylon, an island situated south of the Peninsula of Hindostan, and he therefore proposed to Captain Blisset to bear them to their destination. You may chuse, said he, your own route, you may go the whole distance by water, or if you prefer it, land on the adjoining continent of Hindostan, and, travelling southwards, embark at some port, and thus reach your destination; and, though you will not derive from my commission, any greater advantage, at least you will meet with that accommodation to which officers travelling on the public service are entitled—elephants, horses, carriages, attendants and guides, free of expense. With this liberal proposal, Captain Blisset at once closed, and in three days after the Persian Ambassador's departure, we behold him, together with William, landed on the peninsula of Hindostan, and pursuing his journey southwards, having determined to go to Poonah, which lies inland from the coast. But before we follow him in this route, it will be necessary to give the reader some idea of the geography of that

vast extent which is known by the name of Hindostan:

Hindostan is an extensive region of Asia, lying between 65° and 95° of east longitude, and 8 and 35 north latitude. It comprehends all the countries situated between the south-western part of the Chinese Empire and the Indian ocean. China, therefore, forms its north-eastern boundary, and hardly can it be said to have a southern, for the peninsula being somewhat in the shape of a pear, the eastern and western sides meet in a point, and form its southern extremity called Cape Comorin. These western and eastern shores are bounded, the former by the Arabian ocean, which separates it from Arabia, and the latter by the Bay of Bengal, which lies between it and the Birman Empire. It may also be mentioned, that the northern part of the west side of Hindostan, above where the Arabian Gulf extends to, is bounded by the eastern extremity of the kingdom of Persia. The principal cities of Hindostan are situated along the coasts, and if we traverse these, beginning at the northern extremity of its western shores, down to the southern promontory, Cape Comorin, and from thence up its eastern side; we shall meet with them in the following order—Bombay, Goa, and a few miles within land, Poonah, Seringapatam—from this we come to Cape Comorin, and taking the course up the other side, Trincomalee, Pondicherry, Madras, Calcutta.

Of the Peninsula of Hindostan, the western

side is called the Malabar coast, and the eastern the Coromandel.

Poonah, the city to which our travellers were now advancing, is the capital of the Mahratta state, which lies nearly east of Bombay, inland, and extends almost across the whole peninsula. The party consisted of six persons, besides Captain Blisset, William, and the servant, but their attendants were nearly 200, nor could it consist, it was mentioned at Bombay, of fewer persons, for they were obliged to carry tents, furniture, cooking utensils, and food.

In their journey from the coast to Poonah, the first town they met was Panwell, situated eight miles inland from the shore. Here, at every step, our travellers were reminded that but little time had elapsed since the war between the British and the natives had terminated, for, in the shops, every artizan had a sword and spear lying beside him, and in the fields, every man worked with his arms girded on him. On the 2d night, the party pitched their tents among the hills that form the outskirts of the Ghauts, a chain of mountains, stretching almost due north and south, along the west coast of India. Immediately facing them, a troop of Bringarees had also taken up their residence for the night: these people are a sort of itinerant merchants, travelling from one end of India to another, with salt, grain, and assafetida, which last, in Indian cookery, is almost as necessary as salt. What a singular scene, thought William, as he looked upon it, and

recalled to mind how many thousand miles he was from his native country. The Bringarees had lighted their fires, close by a stream of water, which reflected them upon its smooth surface; on the opposite side of the stream, the palanquin bearers were cooking their food also, while, at a little distance, some of the people were keeping up a blaze, with straw, to keep the flies from the horses.

It was on the third day of this journey, that they visited the great cave of Carli, another excavated mountain, resembling that at Salsette, and lying very near the summit of the mountain, over which they were about to pass, and, although the ascent of the pass had much fatigued them, all their weariness was forgotten as soon as they saw it. Instead of the low flat roof of the cave of Elephanta, this rises to a great height, with a highly arched roof, supported by twenty-one pillars on each side; the length of this cave is forty paces, and its breadth fourteen; the whole being chiselled out of the solid rock; the capitals of these pillars are shaped like a bell, and on the top of each are two elephants, with two riders on each.

The following day, after they had seen the temple at Carli, Captain Blisset and William had an opportunity of riding on two elephants, that were sent to meet them, by the English resident at Poonah, and they found the motions of these animals by no means unpleasant, at the same time, that it would have put a horse to a good round trot to keep up with them; these

animals were eleven feet high, their foreheads and ears beautifully mottled, the tusks very thick, and sawed off to a convenient length, for them to kneel, while the riders mount. On the back of the elephant, an enormous pad is tightly girt with chains and cotton rope, upon this is placed the *houdah*, a kind of box, divided into two parts, the front containing a seat large enough for two or three persons, and the back a space for the servant, who bears the umbrella; the driver sits astride on the animal's neck, and with one foot behind each ear, guides him as he pleases; at the end of each day's journey, the houdah was taken off, they were led to water, when they washed and drank; they were then fastened by the heels to a peg in the stable, when they lay down to sleep for a few hours. Their food was rice, grass, leaves, and young branches of trees, but they are most fond of bread and fruits, particularly the plantain.

From Poonah, which, though the capital of the western Mahrattas, is a small and ill built city, containing nothing remarkable, the party set out on a journey to Visapour, which lies south-east of Poonah, 136 miles, intending to travel from thence to Goa, where they expected to find a vessel, which should carry them to the island of Ceylon.

It was on this journey, that Captain Blisset made William remark the great resemblance which the manners of the people in these *eastern countries*, bore to those of patriarchal *times, as described* in the Bible. Often did they

see the Brahmin women of distinction, drawing water at the village wells, and tending their cattle to the lakes and rivers, to give them drink; and on one occasion they witnessed a scene, which recalled to them the meeting between Abraham's servant and Rebecca, as they entered the Hindoo village, which ended the day's journey. "He made his camels to kneel down, without the city, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time when the women go out to draw water; and behold, Rebecca came, with her pitcher on her shoulder, and the damsel was very fair to look upon, and she went down, and filled her pitcher, and came up, and the servant said unto her, let me drink, I pray thee, and she said, drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; and she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well, to draw water, and drew for all the camels." In fact, said Captain Blisset, change the names, and it becomes a description of what we so often behold.

To detail the journey from Poonah to Visapour, would give but little interest to the reader; it will suffice, therefore, to say, that they merely passed through that city to the diamond mines, in the immediate neighbourhood, which furnish those beautiful gems that adorn the crown of the monarch, and are, besides, so useful in the arts. These mines are said to have been discovered by a countryman, who, digging a piece of ground to sow millet, found a pointed stone, which he sold for a handsome sum, and this

inducing the inhabitants to search further, such was the success of their industry, that, not only many other stones were found, of considerable size, but that wonderful diamond, which afterwards formed the chief adornment in the crown of the native sovereign, Aurung Zeb.

When the miners have fixed upon the place where they mean to dig, they level another space somewhat larger, and enclose it with a wall about two feet high, only leaving large openings from space to space, to give passage to the water which is made to flow through them, and, as occasion requires, to cover the ground. The place being thus prepared, the people that are to work meet all together, men, women, and children, the former to dig, and the women and children to carry the earth from the mine to the chamber prepared to receive it. When they find water, they cease to dig, and the water thus found washes the earth two or three times, after which it is let out at the aperture in the opposite side. When the earth has been washed and dried, they sift it in a kind of open sieve, which operation is repeated before they begin to look for diamonds.

The party now proceeded without delay to Goa, a town on the West coast, which they reached in ten days, their number being reduced to Captain Blisset and his two followers, for the attendants had left them the fourth day after they had quitted Poonah. On the road they had to traverse the same ridge of mountains which they had crossed on their way to Poonah; but

the accommodations which Captain Blisset's official situation procured for them, enabled them to make the journey with great ease. The city of Goa was formerly the capital of the Portuguese territories in India, at the time that they possessed the almost exclusive commerce with the East. At present, however, it is the only settlement they possess. It stands on the banks of the small river Mandova, upon an island of the same name, about twenty-four miles in circumference, on the shore of a most beautiful bay. It, in fact, consists of two cities; the old one, which is eight miles up the river, and the new, at its mouth. The former being unhealthy, is now deserted by all the Portuguese, except the clergy, who are very numerous. It was here that St. Francis de Xavier landed, when he undertook his benevolent mission for the conversion of the Hindoos, and his success was equal to his zeal. His remains were interred in one of the churches, and his tomb, which is of exquisite workmanship, and is adorned with a profusion of the most costly gems, was one of the first curiosities which Captain Blisset and William visited.

The Viceroy and the principal inhabitants of Goa reside in the new town; and here, therefore our travellers took up their residence during the few days that they remained there. They found the ancient European inhabitants very few in number, the remainder being all people of colour, and many of them darker than the natives of India, owing to the importation of slaves

from Africa, whose descendants intermixed with the population. The settlement appears, indeed, almost abandoned by the mother country, and the poverty of almost every class is so great, that women of respectable families, are very glad to earn their bread, by applying themselves to occupations which, in other places, are reserved for those of the poorest class.

At Goa, it had been Captain Blisset's intention to take his passage for Ceylon, but his desire to see something more of the interior of the peninsula, made him change his determination; as soon, therefore, as he had satisfied his curiosity there, he returned to the continent, and taking his course through an open and fruitful country, soon arrived at the territory, of which Seringapatam is the capital. This city is situated on an island, formed by the river Cauvery, and is extremely beautiful, being adorned with elegant buildings, squares, groves, and gardens. It was made the center of his power, by Tippoo Saib, who spared no pains to improve its fortifications, though his father, Hyder Ali, had left it remarkably strong. This Tippoo Saib, was the inveterate enemy to the British in India, and having at last, by his cruelty, provoked an attack, the city was taken, after a most obstinate defence, and he himself slain. It will give the reader some idea of the blessings which we enjoy, who live in a country where no man, not even the highest, has the power to hurt another, that this Indian despot, once, compelled 20,000 trades-

men to quit the neighbouring district, and to go and settle in Seringapatam, where he was able, by this arbitrary act, to establish manufactures of different kinds.

The whole city is surrounded by what is called, a bound hedge, the usual fence for an Indian town, composed of every thorny plant that the country produces. These are set from thirty to fifty feet in depth, and between them is sown a certain plant, called euphorbia, which is so caustic in its nature, as to corrode, not only the human skin, but even that of a horse, which, on forcing its way through, might happen to touch it.

The amount of Tippoo's wealth will appear almost incredible; at one time it consisted of 7,000 elephants, 6,000 camels; 11,000 horses, 400,000 bullocks, 100,000 buffaloes, 600,000 sheep, and an immense quantity of fire-arms.

The throne of Tippoo Saib deserves a particular description; it was covered with plates of gold, and over it was a canopy of the same metal, supported by eight pillars; the canopy was fringed with pearls. The whole was crowned with a bird, made entirely of precious stones. Underneath the throne, lay the figure of a tiger, in the act of devouring an European, and this concealed a curious piece of mechanism, that produced sounds, resembling the cries of a person in distress, mixed with the roaring of a tiger; and it is another instance of his enmity to Europeans, that, having caused several pieces of artillery to be cast, he had each ornament

as he thought it, with the head of a European devoured by a tiger. How completely does anger get the better of us, said Captain Blisset to William, when the natural wickedness of our nature is not corrected by religion, and how greatly would it contribute to the happiness of mankind, if all nations were friendly towards each other. Yes Sir, said William, I recollect being once told, that we were ordered to love one another, and I know, that so far from our being allowed to feel such hatred to our fellow-creatures, we are expressly commanded to love even our enemies.

From Seringapatam their course lay southerly and westerly along the coast of Malabar, as far as Cape Comorin, the extreme point of the Continent.

Throughout the whole of this district, great quantities of pepper are gathered, by cultivating a small climbing plant, on which this spice hangs, like currants. Indeed, no less, it is said, than 150,000 pounds weight are annually produced and exported.

Near Cape Comorin, at a village called Condatchy, is the extensive fishery for pearls, which is carried on by the natives. The Banks on which the pearl oysters are found, extend forty miles along the coast, and are divided into four portions, one of which only, is fished in the year, that the oysters may have time to reach the proper size. The boats' crews and divers, employed in this way, commence their labours at sun-rise, and continue working til

noon, when, the sea breeze setting in, they return to the shore; five divers go down at a time, and remain under water about two minutes, during which time they collect as many oysters as they can, in a net; they, then, make a signal to be drawn up again. Every diver is expected to go down fifty times, in the course of a forenoon. As Captain Blisset remarked, they were all young men, and looked unhealthy; nor was this merely in appearance, for those who escape the numerous sharks which are, sometimes ready to seize them, when they dive, in a short time become consumptive. Did our ladies, at home, said he to William, know, that those little ornaments, which they wear, are procured at the great risk of life to their fellow creatures, I cannot think they would set so high a value on them.

Cochin, the place to which our travellers were now directing their course, had been visited by them on their passage to Bombay, but their stay had been then too limited, to allow them accurately to inspect it. It is the chief city of a district, as we have already mentioned, on the western coast, and belonging to a native prince or rajah, who is under the protection of the British. It is built in the form of a semicircle, on a small island, which stands at the mouth of the Cali Coylang River. The streets are wide and commodious, and the style of the building so like that of the Dutch, that, were it not for the oriental costume of its inhabitants, and the vegetat

about it, a stranger might suppose himself in a town in Flanders. The harbour is on the north-east side of the town, and, though the approach to it is difficult, owing to the bar which the river makes, and which can be passed only at high water, it is a place of much commerce; exchanging its commodities with the whole coast of India, Arabia, Persia, China and Bengal. This part of the Malabar coast is much visited by sharks, for, as Captain Blisset and William walked over the green, which adjoins the town, they saw a large collection of the fins and tail of this fish, exposed to the sun to dry, and which, they were told, were intended for the China market.

In the course of their stay at Cochin, it was observed by our travellers, that scarcely one of the natives had his legs equally paired. This is owing to a swelling, to which they are subject, which commences at the knee, and descends to the ankle, but does not hinder them from walking about, as well as if both legs were perfect; some impute it to the water, and others, to the fish diet, which they principally use; such a limb is known throughout India, by the name of a Cochin leg.

At Cochin, Captain Blisset found a ship which had put in there for some repairs, and was on its way to Point de Galle, in the Isle of Ceylon, and as he hoped thus to obtain a passage to Madras, on the eastern shore of Hindostan, and hence to Calcutta, in Bengal, he did not hesitate to avail himself of it. The vessel

in which he embarked was 800 tons burden, and called a country ship, to distinguish it from those merchantmen which trade in the service of the East India Company, between the East and Europe; all the sailors were Lascars, that is, native Indians, and the only Europeans, aboard, besides our travellers, were, the Captain, three officers, and the surgeon. The ship had been built of teak wood, which lasts much longer than oak, and is also lighter by one-fifth than that wood. The rigging was of coier rope; a cordage which is made of the cocoa nut husk; steeped till the woody part decays, when the fibres are beaten, washed, and laid by hand, as they are too stiff to be spun. It is strong, but has this disadvantage, that frost or rain rots it, and hence they are obliged to cover it with a coating of wax, and hempen yarn; however, for the cables, this is not necessary, for salt water preserves it. Scarcely had they anchored in the roads off Point de Galle, when they were surrounded by a number of little boats, offering vegetables, fruit and bread. These boats were so curiously constructed, that they soon attracted William's attention; a hollow tree formed the bottom, which had the shape of a canoe, on each side of this, a plank was sewed, with coier thread, and the seams filled up with a kind of rosin, called daunna, an old mat or a piece of coarse cotton served as the sail, and the rudder was an oar, or paddle.

Ceylon is an island very nearly as large as Ireland, and is separated from the southern

point of the peninsula of Hindostan by the straits of Manaar. Until lately the Europeans had not penetrated far into the interior, the native inhabitants opposing their advance, with great resolution, and the unhealthiness of the climate offering a still more insuperable barrier, than the unsocial manners of the natives, or, even the successive ranges of mountains, which traverse it in all directions, and are accessible only by narrow passes. Within the last five years, however, the English Government sent a force against the King of Candi, the title by which the native sovereign is known, in consequence of his unprovoked attacks, and also his cruelties to some British soldiers, whom he made prisoners. The result of this contest was, his entire subjugation, his throne, sceptre, and crown having been captured, and sent home to our King, who was then Prince Regent.

But though the climate of Ceylon is unhealthy, it is extremely fertile, producing a great variety of vegetables and fruits. The most valuable, however, of its vegetable productions is cinnamon, which is the bark of a tree growing in those extensive plantations which lie in a tract of country, ten or fifteen miles wide, near Columbo. This is a kind of laurel tree, which grows to the height of twenty feet, and is generally supposed to be peculiar to this island. These trees are barked twice in the year; the first barking being termed the grand harvest, which lasts from April to August; the second beginning in November and terminating in

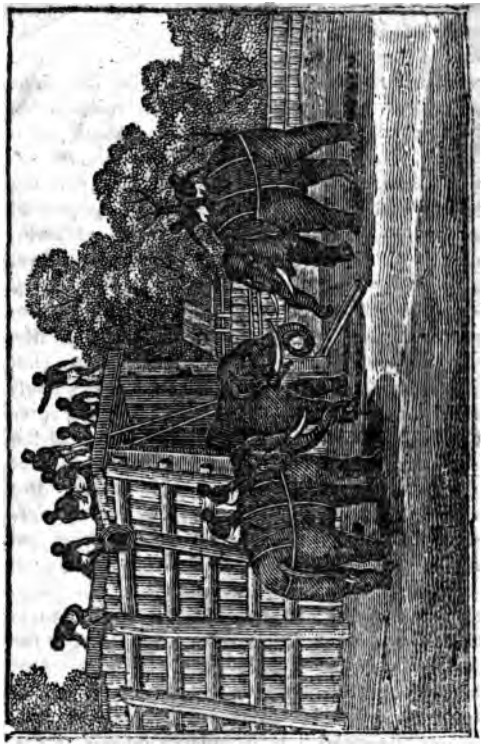
January. On these occasions, the branches are lopped off, the outside scraped, and the bark loosened so as to separate into tubes, which are placed one within the other like the parts of a telescope, and spread out to dry; bundles of thirty pounds weight are then made up, and carried to the store-houses, where the quality of the cinnamon is determined by tasting, a task which is very severe, from its always stripping the skin off the mouth and tongue.

Point de Galle, to the governor of which it was Captain Blisset's first care to deliver the despatches of which he was the bearer, is an old fort, built long ago by the Dutch, and now very much out of repair, though it has a cheerful appearance, from the rows of trees planted on each side of the streets. There are not many English families resident there, but, at the period of Captain Blisset's arrival, a great number had collected there, it being the last rendezvous of the fleet bound for Europe, and many had accompanied, thus far, their friends, who were about to take their passage homewards. A few days after, twenty-two sail got under weigh, at day-break, and many an anxious wish was sent with them, by the crowds, who collected, on the beach, to say farewel to their friends. Many an invalid, with whom the eastern climate had disagreed, was returning home, in hopes that his native air would restore his health, and many anxious parents had separated themselves from their children, were sending them to Europe for their education.

The same evening, Captain Blisset and William went to see an example of the success, which seldom fails to attend on perseverance and industry. This was a little colony of Chinese, who had been brought here, by the Government, as gardeners; for, whether from want of skill, or patience, none of the Europeans, who have possessed Ceylon, were ever able to raise vegetables, in the island. The Chinese, however, succeeded, and now produce, not only table vegetables, in great quantities, but also have some thriving sugar plantations under their management. These gardeners have built themselves very neat houses in the garden, and our travellers observed, with great interest, the simple manner in which these people express their attachment to their native country. At the upper end of the principal room, in each house, there is a high stand, over which hangs a tablet, written in Chinese characters, and containing the names of the forefathers of each family, and before this tablet a lamp is kept constantly burning.

Ceylon being the place from whence the Continent of India is often supplied with elephants, which are there, the largest and finest, Captain Blisset and William embraced, with great eagerness, the offer of joining a party, which was going to Negumbo, to witness the mode of catching them. They left Point de Galle, therefore in a small vessel, and soon arrived at Columbo, which lies, about midway, on the *western coast;* this they left the next morning.

at six o'clock, and reached Negumbo, to dinner, it lying north of the former place, and on the same western coast of the Island. The next morning they proceeded to the Elephant *Craal*, or trap, which is sixteen miles from Negumbo. This craal is in the shape of a funnel, the wide part of which extends several hundred feet into the forest, leaving the trees within, standing. It is composed of strong posts, made of whole trunks of trees, driven well into the ground, and lashed to others placed horizontally, with strong coier ropes. To defend this wall from the fury of the elephants, small fires are lighted, near it on the outside, which intimidate the animals, so that they do not approach it. When the elephants are once driven into the trap, they are prevented from returning, by men stationed at the entrance, with different kinds of weapons, but chiefly sticks, on the ends of which are bundles of lighted straw. They, therefore, rush forward to the lower extremity of the trap, of which one end terminates in a long passage, just wide enough for a single beast, and into this, as soon as one has entered, the hunters thrust long poles, through the interstices, in the walls of the craal, and close him in, so that he cannot move forwards or backwards. Two tame elephants are then stationed, one at each side of the outlet, which, putting in their trunks, hold that of the wild animal till the hunters have passed several bands of rope round his neck, and fastened nooses to each of his feet;



ELEPHANT HUNT IN CEYLON.

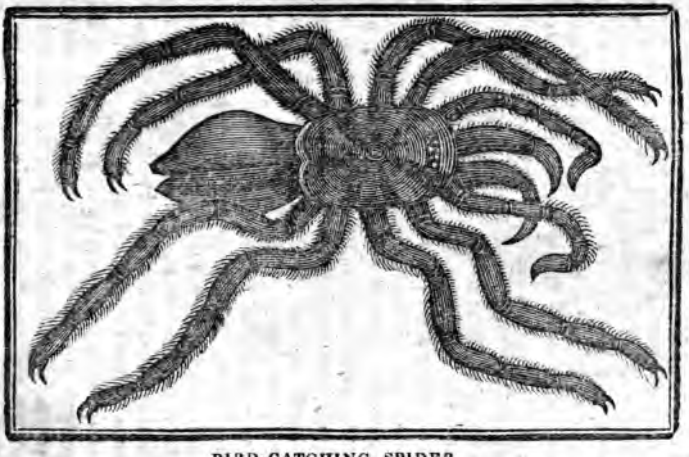
a rope is then passed through his neck-bands, and those of the tame elephants; the stakes, in front are gradually removed, the ropes drawn tighter, and the prisoner is led out, between his two guards, who press him with their whole weight, and thus lead him to the tree, or the stake, where he is to be fastened. If he be refractory, they beat him with their trunks 'till he submits. It has been said that the eye of an elephant is full of intelligence, and indeed, so it seemed to Captain Blisset, who said, he never saw grief and indignation so strongly expressed as by the animal that had been thus caught; he groaned—tried to tear his legs from their fetters—buried his trunk in the earth, and threw dust into the air, not even the choicest food, the plantain tree or the leaf of the young palm, could tempt him to eat, or make him forget his captivity for several hours, and, as the overseer of the hunters mentioned, they sometimes starve themselves to death, though a few days, generally suffices to calm their fury.

Many were the stories told, by the people, to our travellers, of the sagacity of this creature: but as every book that treats of the elephant, contains a great many, as well authenticated as these, it will suffice to mention one, which shows, not only its intelligence, but also its regard for the human race. A considerable body of troops had to cross a river called the Kistna, then much swoln by rains, in doing which, one of the artillery-men, who was mounted on a gun, fell off in the middle of the

stream, immediately before the wheel of the gun carriage; his comrades gave him up for lost; but an elephant, attending on the artillery, had seen him fall, and putting his trunk to the wheel, raised it so as to prevent its crushing the man, and then lifted him out of the water unhurt.

After seeing the process of taking the elephants, Captain Blisset and William walked about the jungle, till the palanquin men were sufficiently rested to carry them back to Negumbo. They were amused with the gambols of swarms of red monkeys which played on the trees over their heads; they saw also, the pitcher plant, growing in great luxuriance, so called from the ends of the leaves having a cup shaped process, growing from it, which contains about two naggins of clean water. As they walked along, also, they observed the ground covered with leeches, which stick to the bare legs of the natives, and often cause disagreeable sores, in case it is attempted to pull them off before they have filled themselves with blood.

Though William did not understand much of the natural history of land animals, he could not but admire the many beautiful and curious kinds with which Ceylon abounded, and though he and Captain Blisset entertained a well grounded apprehension of the serpent, called the *cobra di capelle*, or hooded snake, whose bite causes death in a very short time, this could not deter them from walking into the woods. They



BIRD-CATCHING SPIDER.

saw there the bird catching spiders, whose legs are four inches long, and its whole body covered with thick black hair; but the circumstance that excited most admiration, was the manner in which nature directs the different kinds of birds to build their nests, to defend them from the monkeys and serpents, which would devour them; some for instance, forming them like a long purse, with an opening at top; others making a hole in the side, whilst some, more artful, leave an entrance at the very bottom, and fix them hanging to the end of a slender branch. But the tailor bird is, by far the most ingenious animal; for she makes a cradle, for her young, in the dead leaf, which she lines with feathers, gossamer, and down, and then sews it to a leaf, growing on a tree, with some fine fibres, which she picks up, making use of her tender bill for a needle.

Though the whole island of Ceylon, now, belongs to the British, it is only since the year 1815 that they have possessed it; before that time the Cingalese, or native inhabitants, were governed by their own King, whose power extended to within a few miles of the coast, on all sides. The capital city named Candy, is situated in a plain, surrounded by mountains, one hundred miles from the western shore and one hundred and fifty from the eastern. Of the habits and disposition, of these people, Captain Blisset could learn but little, but even that little was interesting. He found that they were divided into four casts, or tribes; though, wit

the narrow views of almost all those eastern nations, in the cast in which a man was born, in that he must remain; so that, as the different professions were thus determined, and not according to a man's abilities, he could not, as in England and Ireland, chuse out his own trade, and consult his own bent. The nobles, for instance, were the first, or highest cast: artificers of the better classes, the next; those of meaner description and soldiers, the third; and the peasants and labourers were included under the fourth, so that each man has a certain place allotted to him, at his birth, which can never be overstepped. In our own country, said Captain Blisset to William, how different is it, and how many instances have we of our merchants, and our manufacturers becoming nobles, whilst numberless are the instances of a poor man's son acquiring rank, reputation and wealth in the learned professions.

He also found, that, though the Cingalese were so mistaken on this subject, they, nevertheless, possessed a good deal of civilization; they have a language, and written characters, peculiar to themselves, and there can be no doubt of their having given laws to some of the neighbouring kingdoms of the Indian continent; a mission having been lately sent from one of them, called Ava, to procure a copy of the original code. Like Europeans, also, they write from left to right, differing in this respect from the Persians and Arabians, who commence their writing from the right hand edge.

of the paper, and continue it to the left. They write on the leaf of the palmyra, or talipot tree, with a piece of pointed steel. These Cingalese are the handsomest of the Indian race, being well formed, and having very expressive countenances.

Though the inhabitants, in general, are known by the name Cingalese, there is another race, which inhabit the mountainous, and, almost inaccessible parts of the island, and, abstaining from all intercourse with the civilized inhabitants, subsist chiefly by hunting, and are quite ignorant of agriculture; they are called Veddahs. They are, however, remarkable for mildness, and so timid that, when the British light upon them, in their excursions into the interior, scarcely any intelligence can be obtained from them.

Though our travellers could not visit Candy, the capital of the interior of the island, Captain Blisset did not find it difficult to obtain an adequate description of it. He learned that it consists of one street, two miles in length, from which numerous lanes branch off, at both sides. Some of the houses are built of rattans, and tiled and whitewashed, though others are constructed of mud, and rudely thatched; all are raised on terraces, about five feet above the level of the street, and stone steps lead up to every door. This, he was told, was on account of the elephant combats, which the king was accustomed to have exhibited in the principal street. The furniture of these houses is

in general, confined to a few utensils for cooking their food, and a few mats and coarse blanket rugs for bedding. The dwellings of the great, however, are built of stone, and are much more commodious. The royal palace is a handsome building, containing a great many apartments, but the king's throne, as has been already mentioned, had been removed to England, at the termination of the war. It is covered with pure gold, studded with precious stones, and of beautiful workmanship. The two arms of the chair consist of golden lions, whose eyes are amethysts, as large as a musket ball. The royal sceptre, also, was a rod of iron, with a gold head, a very just emblem of the sovereign's government, who was a cruel and despotic tyrant.

It was Captain Blisset's intention to engage a passage in some vessel, setting sail for Trincomalee, a town and harbour which lies on the north-east side of the island of Ceylon, but the unexpected arrival of the Antelope, at Negumbo, on her voyage to Madrass and Calcutta, the two most powerful settlements in this part of the world, and situated on the eastern side of the peninsula of Hindostan, induced him to alter his design. This vessel, on her outward bound voyage, from London, after passing the Cape of Good Hope, had encountered such a continuance of stormy weather, that it was scarcely expected, by those aboard, that they could escape either shipwreck or famine, for they had been driven many degrees out of their course, and now put into Negumbo, to refit

On board this ship, therefore, he and William embarked; and, meeting a steady breeze, which carried them forward, with great rapidity, and induced them to put out every yard of canvass they could, it soon brought them past the Island of Ceylon, and into the roads of Madrass, or, as it is sometimes called Fort George, which lies on the coast of Coromandel, about 3° north of the island of Ceylon, in the eastern side of the peninsula.

When founded in 1640, the territory in which it lay was a barren slip of land, five miles in length, and one in breadth. By conquest, or treaty, however, it is now the capital of an extensive district, seven hundred miles long, and extending very nearly across the peninsula.—The town is situated upon a flat sandy shore, where the surf runs with extreme violence. It has, however, a very fine appearance; the houses being built with long colonnades, and covered with a stucco-plaister, which bears as high a polish as marble; the interior, however, does not correspond with the outside; the apartments presenting nothing but white walls, without any decoration, and few of them having ceilings, from the impossibility of finding any material that shall resist the ravages of the white ant, an insect which eats into wood, and destroys every kind of drapery, with which the rooms might be adorned.

The appearance of the city to a stranger, and none enjoyed it more than our travellers, is, indeed, striking. The clear blue sky, the polished

white buildings, the bright sandy beach, and the dark green sea, all combine to form an object of uncommon beauty; nor does the motley group, to be seen in the streets, weaken the effect; some of them entirely naked, others so completely covered, that nothing but the face and neck is to be seen; women carried in palanquins, on men's shoulders, [illegible] on horseback, clothed like women, in muslin dresses, having black faces, adorned with large gold ear-rings and white turbans.

The black town, as it is called, or that part which is, now, peculiarly the residence of the natives, is four miles in circumference, and is separated from the fort of Madrass only by a level plain. It, also, has some good streets, but the houses are very irregular, and being principally built with mud, and tiled roofs, the whole has a mean appearance. In 1795, the population of both towns was computed at 300,000.

Madrass carries on a very great trade, not only with England, but with China, Ceylon, the different parts of Europe, and new Holland; owing, however, to the difficulty of landing goods, it labours under great disadvantages. The boats employed there, are built of soft wood, extremely light, and are sewed together, not having a nail in their whole construction; hence they are very buoyant and pliable, and are borne, by the surf, many yards on the shore, without any injury. They make use, also, of a raft, called a catamaran, on which they land

such things as are not injured by sea water. The people who work these machines, and the boatmen, are expert swimmers, and it is seldom, when left to themselves, that any accidents occur. A European boat, that should attempt passing the surf, would surely be overset, and would perish.

The next place which Captain Blisset visited, was the capital of the Bengal Empire, and of the English power in India, Calcutta.

Calcutta is the chief city of Bengal, and, of all the British possessions in Hindostan; it is a wealthy and commercial town, situated in the Hoogly, or eastern branch of the Ganges, which, though a hundred miles from its mouth, is navigable even for large vessels, the whole way up to the town. It is the seat of the supreme government of India, and the residence of the Governor-General, as he is called, who is always a person of the highest character for rank and talents, and is appointed by the King of England. The houses are, principally, only one story high, flat roofed and thatched, except in that quarter which is inhabited by the English, where are several handsome residences, built in the English state, and with large gardens adjoining; the Governor-General's palace and garden are inferior to none, in the whole world, in magnificence and extent. Calcutta extends along the banks of the river for about four miles, and contains above half a million of inhabitants. It will scarcely, however, be imagined that, in this large and populous city

there are only three places of Christian worship to be met with. Sir, said William, when I lived on George's-quay, there were three houses of worship within a few streets' length of me, and in the whole City of Dublin (which, I am told, does not measure three miles, at its greatest extent) there are at least fifty; while here in a city four miles long, there are but three to be found.

The mixture of European and Asiatic manners is very striking; coaches, phaetons, chaises, and hacknies, palanquins carried by the natives, the heavy loaded camel, and the stately elephant, parade the streets together: and the people display as great a variety, differing from each other in dress, complexion, religion and manners; here you see the black Hindoo, the olive coloured Moor, and the fair countenance of the Englishman: the Jew and the Turk, the priest and the soldier, or, in other words, Chinese and Frenchmen, Persians and Germans, Arabs and Spaniards, Americans and Portuguese, Jews and Heathens, Hindoos and English thronging together, through the crowded streets. But, though they apparently mingle thus together indiscriminately, no people, in the world, are so jealous of another, or keep themselves more distinct, from each other, than the inhabitants of Calcutta; even the Blacks there will not so much as eat any vegetable food, that has not been cooked by one of *their own tribe* or cast; and, as they call it a *meritorious* act to abstain, altogether, from

eating the flesh of animals, it is not surprizing that a quantity of food is suffered to go to waste; what is not used being always thrown out, and, at night, the Jackalls, hyænas, and other wild beasts may be heard, prowling thro' the streets, come in from the neighbouring woods, to devour this rejected food; to this, also, may be attributed the amazing flock of crows and kites which frequent the town, quite undisturbed, and almost cover the house-tops and gardens.

The inhabitants rise early, to enjoy the cool of the morning, before sunrise; at twelve, they take a hot meal, which they call tiffing, and, those of the more wealthy classes, have the custom of lying down to rest, for a couple of hours, during the intense heat of the day. They dine, usually, between seven and eight, and from that till sun-set, is the time when they walk, ride, or drive out in their open carriages, and the mussalchees, or torch-bearers, go out to meet their masters as soon as it begins to grow dark, and will often run before the carriage at the rate of eight miles an hour.

The boats, which are used on the Ganges, are of various forms and sizes, according to the purposes they are intended for; those calculated for conveying goods from town to town, along the banks of the river, by which a very considerable traffick is carried on, are flat bottomed, having no keel, the sides are raised high, and the planks of which they are formed are sewed together with the fibres of the cocoa-nut; they

are large, and are furnished with a single mast, and a square sail; this kind of boat is called a bar, and another, which somewhat resembles it, is called a massoolah; but those which are called travelling boats, and are kept by gentlemen for their own accommodation, are by far the most elegant and commodious; these are called budgerows, and vary in size according either to the wealth of the owner, or the use he has for them; some are nearly sixty feet in length; and, as it is convenient that they should both sail and row, they are generally furnished with from twelve to twenty oars, and have one mast in the centre. The budgerows usually afford one large apartment, and either one or two sleeping rooms, and, if the owner be a rich man, he will have two smaller boats in attendance on him, one which carries his kitchen utensils, and another for occasionally conveying him on shore. The Moors build *their* budgerows long and narrow, sometimes they are a hundred feet in length, and, perhaps, not eight feet wide, so that, instead of having rooms in them, they erect an awning along the deck, supported by pillars, which are usually gilt and painted, and very handsomely ornamented, and the almost continued fine weather in this climate enables them to live, in this way, in the open air, without any inconvenience.

But of all modes of conveyance the palanquins are the most easy and convenient to the traveller. There are, usually, nine bearers to each palanquin, besides two other attendants,

who carry the traveller's baggage, and also are employed to carry torches to light him on his journey at night; and, though it may seem cruel to impose such labour on our fellow-creatures, for our own accommodation, it must be considered that, not only are there a great many bearers to each palanquin, which considerably lightens the labour, but they have been accustomed to it from an early age, and are required only to go short stages, where they rest; they have good pay from government, for these palanquins are as regularly established along the principal roads, in this part of India, as our mail coaches are in Ireland.

During Captain Blisset and William's stay in Calcutta, they had an opportunity of forming some idea of the storms on this coast. On the occasion which they witnessed, for the space of ten minutes, the wind overthrew every thing which it encountered in its way. Several houses were unroofed, which, with the windows giving way, exposed the inmates to a deluge of rain and hail. The river exhibited a still greater scene of distress; many boats were overset, and such of the crews as could not swim, or secure themselves on the wrecks, perished. A Danish vessel went down on her anchors; the top-masts and yards only remaining above water; to these, however, the crew clung, looking anxiously towards the shore, until, at length, the wind abating its violence a little, a boat was enabled to venture out, and bring them in safety to the land.

It has been already mentioned that it was Captain Blisset's determination to spare no labour or expense in seeing those countries which were within his reach; there were several countries, lying to the east of Bengal, which he wished either to visit personally, or to inform himself of by inquiry; in order, as he said himself to William, that, having travelled so far, to gratify his taste for seeing foreign countries, he might acquire an adequate knowledge of the southern parts of the Asiatic continent. To the east, for instance, of Calcutta, lay the Birman empire, stretching south from Thibet and China 1100 miles, and from the Ganges to the Chinese sea 800. To the south of this empire extended the peninsula of Malacca, nearly 800 miles from north to south, and 100 from east to west, whilst on its eastern boundary, lay the kingdoms of Cambodia, Laos, Cochin-China and Tonquin, four countries of which, from the extreme jealousy of the natives, who are averse even to commerce, but little is known.

The Birman empire, however, from the civilization of the people, their courtesy to foreigners, and the commerce which they carry on with India, promised to repay the fatigues of a journey; and, therefore, having made known his wishes to one of his friends, Captain Blisset soon received an invitation to take a passage in a vessel which was about to sail for the only port through which trade is carried on, it is called Rangoon, at the mouth e

the Irawaddy, a river which rises in the mountains north of the country, and in a course of twelve hundred miles, nearly divides the whole empire into two equal parts, and on the banks of which almost all the principal towns are situated, Ummerapoora, the capital, being the farthest to the northward.

The town of Rangoon stands in a commanding situation, at the head of the bay formed by the mouth of the river, along the banks of which, the buildings forming the outskirts of the town, extend for nearly a mile. The streets are narrow, but are clean and well payed, and thus prevent the ill effects of floods, in the rainy season. The houses are raised on posts, formed of immense stems of forest trees, which elevate them a few feet above the ground; and, as the houses are all made, either of wood, or formed of a kind of strong matting, they are not too heavy to be supported in this manner.

Above the town stands a beautiful temple, situated on a rising ground, which is ascended by a flight of upwards of one hundred steps, cut in the side of the hill, and round the summit are cut terraces, planted with rows of trees, whose rich foliage gives good effect to the lofty spires of the temple that rises above it; the centre and tallest of these is crowned at top, with a sort of cap, in the form of an umbrella, which, as well as the spire that supports it, is richly gilt, and glitters beautifully in *the sunshine.*

Such was the view that presented itself to our travellers, as the vessel cast anchor, in the harbour of Rangoon. Before they could land, however, they were obliged to go through the forms, prescribed by the Emperor. A faithful account was first transmitted to the governor, of every thing the ship contained. A separation being made, between the articles intended for sale, and what belonged to the vessel, the former were deposited in a public magazine. The governor now came aboard, to examine whether every thing had been entered in the list, and, finding every thing correct, invited the captain, and all aboard, to accompany him ashore, in order that the bales might be opened, and the duty charged on each.

Our travellers being now at liberty to fix their residence ashore, the captain, having procured accommodation for them at the house of an English merchant settled there, took them, first, to the market-house, a large public building, somewhat answering to our exchange, but used, likewise, as a place of sale, for the various articles of commerce, brought into the town. Here was assembled a crowd of persons, of different nations, come together to interchange the produce of their respective countries: Turks, Persians, Armenians, Portuguese, English, Americans and French, and all are equally protected, by the government, in their civil and religious rights.

Having seen whatever the town of Rangoon afforded worthy of a traveller's notice, Capt.

Blisset, finding that the vessel in which he came, would be necessarily delayed for some time, before she could dispose of all her merchandize, resolved to hire one of the boats that ply on the river, and go up the Irawaddy, as far as it was navigable, a course which would enable him, not only to visit all the principal towns, which, as has before been mentioned, are situated on the river, but, also, to see the interior of the country, with less difficulty, and fatigue, than by land travelling. He had, at first, intended to penetrate the Birman empire, from south to north, but, the undertaking, he found, would be attended with difficulty, and danger. He was, therefore, obliged to lay it aside, and rest satisfied with seeing the capital; the country, north of that, being infested with wild beasts, except in the immediate neighbourhood of the villages, and also ill provided with roads, and the means of travelling.

The barge, in which he took his departure from Rangoon, was one of those in ordinary use, though built of a singular construction. "Captain," said William, "I dont know how you and I could ever have made our long voyages, if we had not something better than these to cruise in," as he measured, with his eye, from end to end, the boat, sixty feet in length, that they were about to step into; nor was it more than about ten or twelve feet wide; indeed, from its extreme narrowness, in proportion to the length, it was rowed by twenty-six men, and, although, the motion wa

not swift, our travellers were not only secure, but comfortable, by an awning being erected, over the deck, to give them shelter, from the heat of the sun, at noon-day, as well as to afford them accommodation for sleeping at night. As they passed along the well wooded banks, they found that the face of the country presented a fertile appearance, and was varied, with rising grounds, well covered with trees, and having rich plains extending at their base. The soil, they were told, produces all kinds of grain, and vegetables, and the finest fruits, particularly the pine-apple, which may be said to grow spontaneously; but its principal production is the teak timber, or Indian oak, which, as we have already said, is more durable than any wood that is known. This tree grows, principally, on the hills, and being floated down the river to the port of Rangoon, is a valuable article of commerce. Its stem grows perfectly straight, and is often sixty, or seventy feet in length.

Our travellers pursued their course, up this river, uninterruptedly, until they reached the city of Pegue, where they arrived, just in time to see the festivities, observed on ushering in the new year. All was bustle and gaiety, but no excess; nor was there a single instance to be seen of intoxication, though thousands of the common people attended.

It being known that they were strangers, the governor conducted them, with great ceremony

to the temple. The troops that attended him, made a most singular appearance; several were naked to the middle, wearing nothing but a waist-cloth rolled round them. Some were dressed in velvet, or cloth coats, regardless of the size or fashion. Some wore Dutch broad-brimmed hats, trimed with gold-lace; others the crowns of hats, without any brims at all. In short, never was there seen such an extraordinary looking set of people; every one seemed privileged to wear whatever he chose to put on. The diversions consisted entirely of boxing and wrestling. As soon as one engagement was concluded, the combatants prostrated themselves before the governor's throne, whilst an attendant covered their shoulders with two pieces of cotton cloth, as a reward for their services. After this exhibition was over, the company was refreshed with tea and sweetmeats.

Disgusted with looking at the boxing-matches, for our travellers could not agree with some of their countrymen at home, that there is any amusement in seeing their fellow-creatures fight like wild beasts, they were glad to change their situations, and repair to the government-house, where they saw a curious procession of the deputies, sent from the neighbouring districts, to assist at the general festival. A small waggon, laden with fire-works, and drawn by four buffaloes profusely decorated with peacock's feathers, and the tails o Thibet cows, first advanced, followed by U

men belonging to it, dancing and shouting.—The females, most of whom were young girls, came last, in a separate troop, singing in full chorus, and clapping their hands in measured time.

The next morning, at eight, a vast concourse of spectators were assembled, and temporary sheds erected, for the accommodation of those of superior rank. The exhibition of this day consisted chiefly of the most brilliant fire-works than can be imagined. The rockets were particularly grand, and of uncommon size: they rose to a great height, and, as they descended, threw out various appearances of fire that were really very beautiful; but as the exhibition took place during the noon-day, they could not, of course, be seen to advantage.

Each company, after having displayed their own fire-works, marched before the Governor, to the sound of musical instruments, and concluded the entertainments of the day with songs and dances.

After these festivities were concluded, Captain Blisset had leisure to examine the town, of which the building most deserving of notice is the temple; resembling, however, very much that which he had previously seen at Rangoon, except in point of size, in which it far exceeds it. The temple at Pegue has above one hundred tall spires, one of which, together with the cap or umbrella (which is of open iron work is fifty-six feet in circumference, and is called, by the natives, the Tee.) These spires

are richly gilt, and seem, at a distance, like a forest of gold, from whence the edifice has been called the Golden Temple; round the rims of the Tee are hung small bells, which keep up a continued tinkling sound, which is heard at a considerable distance. The town itself, from its similarity to Rangoon, presented but little novelty to our travellers; and they, therefore, pursued their course up the river, much interested in observing the nature of the country, and the habits of the people, as they passed along.

The Birmans are hospitable and social, and particularly kind to foreigners from any part of the world; but there is found, in different parts of the country, a distinct race of people called Carianers. who devote themselves exclusively to agriculture; and, what is most singular, differ from all around them in habits, manners and language; forming amongst themselves a select community, and refusing to intermingle or marry with strangers.

But there is one excellence in the character of this harmless people, in which it would be well if they were imitated by those who, through the goodness of Providence, enjoy the light of Christianity. They live at peace, not only amongst themselves, but with all men; they carry on no war; they give no offence themselves, and they forgive the injuries they receive from others. They have all the custom of chewing beetle leaf, and, for this purpose, they are usually attended by a servant

carrying a box filled with that article. Rich gold chains are an ornament in much esteem amongst them, and are considered by them as a badge of nobility: the number of chains increasing in proportion to the rank of the owner. The Emperor alone wears twenty-four. Gold is, in fact, considered by the Birmans as the type of every thing rich or noble, although it is singular, that with this idea of the value of gold, their coins are only made of silver, or of lead: but they use it greatly in ear rings, and in ornamenting their public buildings; indeed, almost every thing belonging to the Emperor, or the royal palace, is decorated with that precious metal; nor is it unusual, in speaking of his majesty, to say, as a mark of his great dignity, "the Golden Sovereign," or to call the reception of any person at court, "admission to the Golden Feet;" and one man, who came down to the shore, told Captain Blisset the Emperor had heard of his coming into the country, by saying, "the news of your arrival has reached the Golden Ears."

The Birmans, both men and women, paint the edges of the eye-lids and their teeth black, which gives them a disagreeable appearance to strangers. They are dark coloured, like all other Indians, though somewhat fairer (especially the women) than those of Hindostan; but the men have one very singular custom, which is not known in any other country, that of plucking out the beard by the roots, for

they consider it a great deformity to let it grow. As they passed up the river, groups of the men of rank of the country were to be seen strolling along the river side, seated under the shade of trees, or occasionally mounted on horseback, these were usually dressed in a tight vest with long wide sleeves of either white muslin or nankeen, over which they all wear wide robes of silk girt to the waist. The Birman women of the lower classes work very hard. Early in the morning they were often to be seen, ten or twelve of them together rowing small boats up and down the river, laden with vegetables for market at the different towns; and in the evening, on returning from these expeditions, it was pleasing to hear their voices singing a sort of chaunt together, as they rowed along the water. Music is a favourite diversion with these people; they use drums, a sort of guitar, clarionets and flutes of various kinds; but their principal instrument is a harp of a long narrow shape, tapering to a point at each end somewhat in the form of a boat.

The natives came down to the shore very often to see the strangers, as they passed along, and usually presented them with a gift of fruit, flowers, or honey found in the woods, the produce of the wild bees, which are here so numerous that their wax forms a staple article of commerce.

In pursuing their course up the river, they passed the ruined town of Ava, once a flou-

rishing city, and the capital of the empire, but now fallen so much into decay as to excite in our travellers no desire to visit it: and they, therefore, continued on their course until they came to the city of Ummerapoora, now the capital of the country, and the residence of the Emperor.—No sooner had they reached the city than his Majesty, having received intimation of their arrival (for so seldom did Europeans visit the capital, that our travellers excited a great sensation amongst all ranks,) sent down two elephants covered with the richest saddle-cloths and harness, to convey them to the palace; for William, being an European, was considered, by them, to be of as much consequence as the Captain; a crowd of attendants also came down to the shore, with the elephants, and now followed Captain Blisset and William, walking two and two, in a regular order of procession; the officers of state being all dressed in their court robes of silk. The houses in the streets, through which they passed (every one of which was crowded with spectators) were fresh white washed, and decorated with boughs and flowers. When they drew near the palace, having alighted from the elephants, they were desired to make obeisance to the residence of the sovereign, by bending the body, and raising one hand to the head. This ceremony was repeated very often till they reached the saloon, when, putting off their shoes, they seated themselves on carpets. Here they were ordered to stay till the arrival of

the king's sons. The appearance of each, with their attendants, was highly superb. The eldest son was carried in a very rich palanquin, and screened from the sun by a large golden fan; the rest walked with their attendants. After this they were shewn into the hall of audience, which displayed all the grandeur of the court. It is supported by seventy-seven pillars, and at the end of it is a high gilded lattice, which conceals the throne. When his Majesty arrived, these folding doors opened, and displayed the throne, which is richly carved and gilt; on two tables near it, stood several large vessels and other ornaments of gold.

His Majesty seemed scarcely able to ascend the flight of steps that lead to his seat, from the weight of his dress, which was supposed to be equal to fifty pounds of gold; he literally bore the appearance of a man cased in golden armour, with a wing of the same metal on each shoulder. His crown was a high cap, richly studded with precious stones; and his fingers were covered with rings.

Four Brahmins, or priests, in white caps and gowns, chaunted a song at the foot of the throne. Captain Blisset and William then made their obeisance to his Majesty, which he slightly returned, and, in a few minutes, withdrew, without deigning to honour them with any further notice than an attentive look. It would seem as if he had invited them to court solely for the purpose of gratifying his own curiosity, and displaying his royal magnificence. Indeed, th

titles given to this monarch, and the reverence they treat him with, are so extravagant, that few persons, perhaps, could be found proof against such adulation. Amongst the former are—the sovereign of the earth—the emperor of emperors—the sovereign esteemed for riches and happiness—the monarch of elephants and horses, and all good things—the lord of high-built palaces, of gold, &c. &c.

The palace in which our travellers were received is a spacious stone building with four gates; ambassadors, they were told, enter by that to the east, which is called the golden gate, because they are expected to appear before him with presents. The south gate is devoted to justice, and at which all enter who bring petitions, complaints, or accusations. The west is the gate of favor, through which all pass that have been cleared from suspicion, or that have received favors. And the north is the gate of state, by which his Majesty passes, when he thinks fit to honour his subjects by shewing himself.

After our travellers had been regaled at the palace they returned into the town, but the Emperor, probably from the same motive that induced him to seek an interview with them, ordered that they should be provided with accommodation in the palace; upon this they were conducted to a remote part of the building, distant from the royal apartments; and here they took up their residence, and received every accommodation they could require; their

rooms were richly carpeted, and the window looked to a beautiful view on the river, enli vened by the number of boats that were con tinually passing up and down. It is unneces sary to give a description of the town; it narrow streets paved with bricks, the house formed of matting or slender planks of wood and its temples, with gilded spires, rendered i so similar to those which our travellers had al ready visited. It is sufficient to add, that the spent a few days at Ummerapoora, but neve saw the Emperor afterwards.

In a few days, therefore, having received th Emperor's permission, Captain Blisset and Wi liam quitted Ummerapoora, and having now th current of the river in their favour, they soo reached Rangoon, where they found the vess in which they had come, almost ready for se A change, however, now took place in th destination of our travellers, and it will appe less surprising when the reader considers th their object being to gratify an ardent curiosity they were tied to no place but that whic should best advance this scheme. At Rangoo Captain Blisset found a number of his countr men, with whom he associated; but there w an American vessel at anchor, at Rangoo with the Captain of which he formed a clo intimacy. Discoursing together one day, th found that they had actually fought agai each other during the war, a storm afterwa rising, which separated the ships durin night, and this now served to create a

macy which soon ripened into friendship. We were national opponents once, said Captain Blisset, and, perhaps, there is nothing which more forcibly shews the evil of war, than its making enemies of those who, but for this, would be fast friends. Let us endeavour to make up for it now, said Captain Wells, and so they did, for they became so attached, that Captain Blisset was easily induced to accept an offer of a passage to Pekin, whither the American was going to regulate some difference which had occurred between the American Merchants and the Chinese. You may as well take a birth with me, said Captain Wells, and we shall reach our destination about the same time as the Embassy which your country was sending out about the time that I was quitting New York upon this mission. I receive your offer with gladness and shall only thank you by saying that should I ever get a command of another vessel, you or your friends shall be always welcome to share my mess; and thus was the arrangement made: Captain Blisset and his faithful William being a few days afterwards embarked on their way to the capital of China.

As they passed along the southern and south eastern shores, it would have gratified our travellers much, could they have visited the kingdoms of Cambodia, Laos, Cochin-China, and Tonquin; which, as mentioned before, lie east of the Birman empire: but the extreme jealousy with which strangers are regarded

rendering it impossible to travel through them, they were, though reluctantly, obliged to renounce their wishes.

In ten days from the period of their embarkation, the vessel passed along the western shore of the Birman empire, also of the Malaya, and jetting through the straits of Malacca, which separate the country of the Malays from the large island of Sumatra, and lie in the 3d and 4° of north latitude: their course next lay northwards along the south eastern kingdom of Cambodia, which along with the countries of the Birman empire, and Malaya, aptly represent, like Italy in Europe, the foot of a trooper's boot: hence they steered northwards along the eastern coast of China, through its whole extent of nearly 20 degrees of latitude, until at length they reached the mouth of the gulf of Petchelee, at the bottom of which lies the town of Pekin. It was with no small interest that Captain Blisset found him about to land in a country which, never making any alteration in its manners or customs, must have been 1200 years ago much more civilized than any part of Europe, though the continually improving civilization of other countries has now left it far behind.

The gulf of Petchelee once entered, they soon crossed it, and anchored at the mouth of the river Pei-ho, lying in the 39° of north longitude, 118° of east longitude. The next morning with a favourable breeze they crossed a considerable bar of sand which traverses

this bay, in the same manner as the bay of Dublin is crossed by the banks called the north and south bulls, and sailed up the river Pei-ho, which is navigable for many miles up its streams.

The river within the bar was about 500 yards wide, and covered with boats of every form and description. On its southern bank was a small village called Tung-coo; but the port of Ta-coo to which the ship was bound, is situated some miles higher up the river. Their passage being against the current of the stream was necessarily slow; nevertheless, as the wind was in their favour, they made good way. The land on each side appeared low and marshy, and the houses were, for the most part, miserable huts, built of mud, while here and there stood a more wealthy and substantial looking residence. Among the inhabitants who appeared along the river were some women, the extreme smallness of whose feet shewed Captain Blisset that the stories he had so often heard of the custom of confining the feet from infancy were not fabulous. This practice is prevalent throughout the whole empire; those only refraining from it who are in the very poorest and humblest class of life. To have the feet of the natural size is, therefore, considered by them as a mark of inferiority, or of disgrace, and is studiously avoided: hence, parents swathe their daughters' feet from the earliest infancy, totally regardless of the suffering they thus subject them to.

The feet, thus cramped, remain as small as those of children, even when the girl has grown to womanhood, and are considered a great beauty.

Our travellers soon afterwards reached the town of Tacoo, and as the American was not to proceed further up the river, they took leave of him with the warmest assurances of friendship: they also hired a boat for their own conveyance, resting during night at small villages on the way, and resuming their course by day.

This mode of proceeding, however, was quite too tedious for Captain Blisset whose anxiety to reach Pekin increased the nearer he approached it. He, therefore, here hired a small low car, such as is frequently used by travellers, and which, though a rumbling, uneasy vehicle, carried him and William quickly over the ground. A wide and level tract still lay between him and Pekin, called the great plain of Pee-chee-lee, and this once crossed, he soon found himself at the gates of the city.

Our travellers were well pleased to find themselves at length arrived at this great city of Asia, the capital of the empire of China, containing upwards of three millions of inhabitants, whose bustling crowded streets formed not an unpleasing contrast to the wild and desert scenes which they had recently witnessed in some parts of the Birman empire. They, therefore, lost no time in waiting on the British Ambassador who assured them that he woul

assist them in the gratification of their curiosity by every means in his power.

The city may properly be said to consist of two parts, the Chinese and Tartar quarters, each of which formerly held the other as a distinct and separate town, although they are now, in fact, but parts of the one city; and the walls which they each have built to shut out one another, are still, in part, standing, though very much fallen into ruin. The Chinese quarter of Pekin contains about nine square miles, and the other, which, in fact, forms the main body of the town covers a space of fourteen square miles. The whole, therefore, forms one of the most extensive cities in the world, and is considered to be at least twice the size of London.

One large street, four miles in length, and 120 feet broad, runs through the central part of the town, and is crossed by another of equal length and breadth; the other streets are narrow, and many of them can only be considered as lanes. They are all unpaved, and covered with sand and dust, but are kept clean and frequently watered. The two principal streets consist almost entirely of rows of shops which are handsomely adorned with painting and gilding, and as the goods are not only laid out within to great advantage, but are displayed outside of the doors, the whole appearance is extremely shewy and ornamental to the town. In front of those houses stand wooden pillars, which reach much higher than the roof, or

which are fixed crossed boards, with inscriptions in gilt letters announcing the name and trade of the proprietor, and the various goods he has to dispose of. To these poles are hung long streamers of coloured silks and ribbons, like the masts of ships, with their colours flying.

"Well, William, how do you like Pekin," said Captain Blisset, next morning, after they had walked through the town. "Why, Sir, we have been in a great many strange places before now, but I think this city surpasses any thing we have seen yet. The regular form of the streets, the flat roofs of the houses covered with flowers, and the colours flying make it look more like a camp than a city. But, then, the streets are so crowded, and what with the cobblers, the tinkers, the blacksmiths, the barbers, all carrying on their trades in their little stalls out in the very middle of the street, it is almost impossible for one to make his way through them at all; and I was in one part of the town to-day where I saw tents and booths in which were people selling tea, fruits, and rice, and other things of that kind; but what crowds the streets more than all the rest, are the troops of dromedaries coming in, as they tell me, with coals from Tartary, so I suppose the Chinese have none in their own country; and then the way the people have of carrying their fruits and vegetables for sale in wheelbarrows, instead of putting them in baskets on their heads, as they do in Dublin, which is

not such an annoyance to the foot passengers. And as to noise, I used to think Dublin bad enough, but it is peace and quietness compared to this town, for the voices of the multitudes that are buying and selling their various commodities, and the cries of jugglers, fortune-tellers, conjurers, and musicians, I think never cease night or day."

Captain Blisset's great object of curiosity was to see the Emperor's palace, which is situated within the walls of the city; and as his Majesty was then at one of his country residences, he was permitted to see the pleasure grounds, though he could not get admission into the palace. These, however, afforded him much amusement from the singular manner in which they were laid out. They are enclosed by what is called the yellow wall, from the colour of the varnished tiles with which its top is covered, and which glitter in the view like burnished gold. The space contained within the palace walls is about a mile square, and is laid out in lakes and hills formed entirely by artificial means. The beds for lakes have been dug and water brought to them by forcing pumps, and the hills have been formed by mounds of earth, that have been carried in there and heaped up to a considerable height. These are richly planted, and a number of small pleasure houses have been built on them; while the lakes being sprinkled with islands, causes the whole to have a most pleasing and

singular effect; and Captain Blisset was told that his Majesty has another palace situated just outside of the town which is laid out in a similar manner.

The city of Pekin is surrounded by walls about forty feet high, and which are twenty feet thick at bottom, but the breadth at the top does not exceed twelve feet, so that it has a considerable slope, especially on the inside, and rises by stages like pyramids at intervals of seventy yards. Along the wall stand high square towers, and outside of it there runs a deep fosse all round the city, so that the Chinese consider their capital to be very well fortified.

Amongst the public buildings at Pekin, the principal ones are more for ornament than use, there are triumphal arches which have been built either in memory of remarkable men, or else to commemorate some particular national event, and several of them are erected across the two main streets of the city already mentioned.

The shops are almost entirely confined to these two streets; the others, therefore, present but a gloomy appearance; for all private dwelling houses are built a little off the line of the street, and have a confined court before them, which is shut in by a high blank wall; and besides that, it is not unusual to light the houses principally from the rear, so that frequently there is nothing to be seen all along the street but blank walls.

But while Captain Blisset and William were

sights before them, they soon began to feel, that they in their turn were giving as much amusement to the natives. Their short coats and smooth faces formed a ridiculous contrast to the wide flowing robe and long beard of the Chinese. In this, however, they were not singular, for though the appearance of Europeans, and especially of Englishmen is very rare at Pekin; it happened that there had lately arrived there the British Ambassador of whom Captain Wells had spoken, with all his train of servants and attendants; amongst whom a black man servant to one of the English officers seemed to attract most notice. The dark colour of his skin and woolly head, nothing like which, it would seem, had ever been seen in Pekin before, led some of the people to doubt whether he belonged to the human species or not; they all called him a Fan quee (or black fellow) as he passed along

The Chinese have no coinage of silver, but it is not unusual for them to purchase articles of value, by giving in exchange lumps of that metal, which has been merely refined, and all the dross extracted from them; these, though set each into any mould or form, are always made up into pieces of a certain weight, usually of about eight or ten ounces, and are marked accordingly.

At Pekin, Captain Blisset had a pleasure which he had not for a long time enjoyed in *meeting* with some old acquaintance; amongst the officers who were there in the British

Ambassador's suite. Through them he obtained an introduction to his Excellency, who received him with great kindness, and a few days afterwards sent to inform him, that as the Emperor was now at one of his palaces in the country, situated a few days' journey from Pekin, he purposed going there immediately, in order to wait upon his Majesty, and if Captain Blisset wished to accompany him, he would be very happy if he would join in his suite. This proposal he most gladly accepted, and having obtained permission for William to accompany him, matters were quickly arranged for their departure.

The valley of Zhe-hol, in which the Emperor's palace is situated, is about a week's journey from Pekin; although on the borders of China, it is actually in Tartary, and lies to the north-west of the city.

The Ambassador was accompanied by a number of Chinese, and most of his European attendants, and carriages, and other modes of conveyance being provided, they set forward on their journey, at an early hour in the morning. The Ambassador himself travelled in his own carriage, with four fine Tartar horses. It was a handsome English-built chariot, and excited the astonishment of all the natives as they passed along, who are accustomed only to *low, clumsy, two-wheeled carriages, fixed without springs,* immediately to the shafts, and little *better than* common carts—his Excellency had

Emperor; but one of the Officers told Captain Blisset, that, on its being landed from the vessel, the people had expressed great dissatisfaction at the seat for the servant being raised higher than that part of the carriage which his Majesty was to occupy, and that it would be necessary to alter it before it could be presented to him.

The evening before the Embassy set out, a Chinese nobleman (called in that country Mandarines) waited upon the Ambassador with a message from his Majesty, who, being aware of his intention of coming to Zhe-had, sent to inform him, that there were several palaces along the road on which he was to travel, erected for the Emperor's accommodation, and that he had given orders that his Excellency and suite should be received in them, whenever they wished to stop on their journey.

They now, therefore, pursued their journey without difficulty; the plain in which Pekin is situated extends a considerable way to the north and east—westward the hills began to rise at a little distance, but on the east, for many miles, there was a perfect level on to the gulf Pee-chee-lee.

On their way the Ambassador occasionally took one or two of the Chinese nobles into the carriage with him, whose terror, lest it should overturn, was highly amusing, but being assured of its perfect safety, they became delighted with its easiness, lightness and rapidity, the ingenuity of the springs, and the contrivance

for raising and lowering the blinds and windows.

This excursion afforded Captain Blisset a better opportunity of getting an insight into the habits and customs of the people than any he had yet enjoyed; for he had in company with him in the carriage one of the Chinese merchants attached to the British factory at Pekin, who being very communicative and well informed, gave him much useful information. He observed the country to be thinly wooded, except along the edge side; few trees, besides the willow were found, except poplars and ash, and a few mulberry trees; the former appeared, however, to grow very luxuriously; the Chinese merchant pointed out one, the stem of which he said, was fifteen feet in circumference at the height of six feet from the ground. During the first day's journey, they passed several small rivers, navigable only for boats of light burden, which are employed in conveying goods down to Pekin from the different parts of the country, and in places where there is no conveyance by water, the natives make use of dromedaries to carry their merchandize to market. In the course of his journey afterwards, Captain Blisset met droves of these animals on their way to Pekin, sometimes laden with the richest furs of Tartary; sometimes with charcoal, that article being in great demand, for it is the chief fuel used throughout the city.

journey at one of those palaces already mentioned, where they found every thing provided for their accommodation. During the next few days, nothing particularly worthy of notice occurred, except that their road led from the level plains which they had hitherto been traversing, over some of the hills already mentioned, as appearing to them at a distance when they first set out on their journey.

On the morning of the fourth day's journey, our travellers saw that celebrated work of art called the wall of China, which is so justly considered one of the wonders of the world. At what period this vast piece of mason work was commenced, is quite uncertain, but it is known to have been completed three hundred years before the birth of Christ. It was originally intended by the Chinese as a rampart to protect them from the incursions of their neighbours the Tartars, and extends along what is supposed to have then been the northern and western boundary of their own dominions, winding over a chain of lofty mountains for an extent of between one thousand and fifteen hundred miles; sometimes where vallies intervene between these mountains, the wall is found full thirty feet high, but where it is carried over high ledges of rocks, it is not more than twenty, but such is its thickness, that the top is flat, paved with stone, and so broad that a carriage might drive along it. The first appearance to our travellers, while yet at a distance from it, was that of a mark or line,

extending along the mountains: sometimes it stretches over the highest ridges of the rocks, and then descending, sweeps down into the valley, and winds up the side of the succeeding hill, crossing upon arches over rivers, and interspersed with towers at very short distances from each other. In this manner is its course carried on, and when we consider the extreme difficulty of conveying the materials to places apparently inaccessible, (for it is not built of the stones of the mountains but of brick), and the vast expense and labour of such an undertaking, the wall of China must ever be looked upon with surprize and admiration.

Our travellers approached it by a steep ascent, and found that the towers were evidently intended as fortifications, where probably in time of war, troops were stationed for the defence of the frontiers. In many parts the wall is doubled and even trebled for the sake of security, and the towers are placed about one hundred yards from each other, and vary from ten to forty feet in height. This great work may well be considered as the most astonishing production of human industry; the wall itself, without the towers, is calculated to contain materials enough to build all the dwelling-houses in England and Ireland, and it is also said, if all the stones in the towers alone were collected together, they would suffice to build a city as large as London. But it will give a still further idea of this stupendous work, that its materials would be sufficient for a wall

six feet high and two feet thick, whose length fifty thousand miles, would twice go round the world.

Military honours were paid to the Ambassador and his train, as he passed: the troops were drawn up in two lines, facing inwards; they were formed by companies, each of which had its own leader and its standards; at their head stood their band of musical instruments, and beyond at the further extremity of their line, were placed some small field pieces of various forms and constructions; the whole number of troops thus drawn out amounted to about a hundred, but they extended their lines to a considerable length by leaving an interval of seven feet between each of the companies Near to this gate there were formed some breaches in the wall, which afforded them an easy opportunity of examining it; and they there discovered that this main body consisted of a high bank of earth, enclosed on each side by a thick wall of masonry, this is surmounted by a platform of stone masonry, and above rises a solid mass of brick wall; the stone work projecting about two feet beyond the brick wall, and neither mortar nor any kind of cement appears tohave been used in the whole building.

Soon after they entered upon Tartary; their road led through several small and scattered villages, where there were yet to be seen several Chinese families, the women always distinguished by their little feet, a peculiarity which, however close their habits of intercourse with

them, the Tartars never yet have been known to adopt.

As the travellers advanced into Tartary, the season became gradually colder, the roads more rugged, the vegetation less luxuriant, and the little wood which the mountains afforded grew all on their southern sides, the others bearing little more than a few thorny shrubs, and a scanty covering of parched grass.

In the vallies between these mountains, there is a species of hare to be found, which is remarkable for changing its colour, in winter to white, and again resuming its natural brown in summer. In some respects too this animal is very peculiarly formed, its feet and toes being of an extraordinary length, which when he leaps over snow form a round base that supports him from sinking into it.

Their road for the most part lay along the foot of the hills, so that their view of the country was very much confined; however, on the seventh day of their journey, they came to where there was a spacious valley between two of these mountains, this was the valley of Zhehol, their place of destination; in the midst of it stood the small town of the same name, and beyond it, situated upon a richly wooded rising ground, lay the Emperor's palace and pleasure grounds; of these the former is called "the seat of grateful coolness," the latter "the garden of innumerable trees."—As they approached this imperial residence,

selves in the order of procession, and Captain Blisset was much amused afterwards by hearing, that at the time, instead of being seated in state awaiting their arrival, his Majesty was entertaining himself by watching all the proceedings of the embassy from a rising ground in one of his gardens. It was received with military honours, amidst a crowd of spectators on horseback and on foot; several of the latter were dressed entirely in yellow, a favourite colour all through China, their heads being likewise covered with round yellow hats.

The residence allotted to the embassy was situated close to the town of Zhehol. It was built on the gentle slope of a hill, and consisted of different courts, each upon a higher level than the preceding one, and communicating with each other by flights of stone steps; the whole was sufficiently spacious, with a pleasant prospect of the Tartar hills, a view of the town, and of part of the Emperor's park. The town of Zhehol, with the exception of a few residences belonging to Mandarines, consists of a few miserable hovels, crowded with population. The streets also are crooked, unpaved and very dirty.

A day was at length fixed for the presentation of the British Ambassador to the Emperor, but instead of appointing the ceremony to take place in the palace, his Majesty gave orders that his favourite gardens should be prepared for that purpose. Tents were accordingly fitted there, a feast prepared, and according to

the Chinese custom on all state occasions, the hour of dawn of day was fixed on for the visit.

On that morning the Ambassador and the gentlemen of the embassy, including Captain Blisset and William, repaired before day light to the garden of the palace; in the center of the garden was a spacious and magnificent tent, the roof of which was supported within by gilded pillars; on one side of this tent was placed a splendid throne, and, on the opposite side, a wide opening led into a second, that was painted yellow, and extended out to a considerable length. The furniture of each was elegant, without being gaudy, several round tents were pitched in the garden in front of the principal one, of which one was for the use of the embassy while waiting for the Emperor; others were appointed for the accommodation of several princes of Tartary, and delegates from the neighbouring states who were then at court at Zhebol, and were now assembled on this day to grace the reception of the English Ambassador; others were also provided for the male branches of the royal family, and the principal officers of state. In the great tent his Majesty was to receive the Ambassador from the King of Great Britain.

Before the Emperor's arrival the Ambassador's tent was filled with a number of persons who were induced either through civility or curiosity to visit him. Amongst them was [illegible] of his Majesty

sons, and as many grandsons, all of them co teous and dignified in their manners, and two young men tall, and remarkably han some.

Soon after day-light the sound of seve musical instruments, and the confused voic of men at a distance were heard, and it w announced that the Emperor was coming presently the whole procession was seen wind ing down the hill on which the palace wa situated. His Majesty was seated in a sort o open chair, or car, borne by sixteen men, and before him came a number of persons who, according to the usual custom, proclaimed aloud the praises of their sovereign, and the whole was followed by a crowd of guards, musicians, and officers of the household, carrying flags. His Majesty was dressed in a robe of plain dark coloured silk, with a velvet bonnet, in form not much differing form the bonnet of Scotch highlanders: on the front of it was a large pearl, the only ornament which he appeared to wear.

On his entrance into the tent he immediately mounted the throne, and his chief counsellor Ho-choong-taung, and two of the principal persons of his household placed themselves standing near to him. Then the princes of his family, all the great officers of state and the Mandarines being arranged in their respective places, the President led forward the British Ambassador to the foot of the throne, accompanied only by his page, and his Chinese

interpreter. The other gentlemen of the Embassy remained at the entrance to the tent, from whence, however, they had a full view of the ceremonies that passed within.

His Excellency was dressed in a richly embroidered suit of velvet, adorned with a diamond badge and star of the order of the Bath, and over the whole he wore a long and flowing mantle of the same: the deference which he wished to pay to the Chinese fashion of dress induced him to adopt this costume; for that nation is remarkable for adopting whatever mode of dress is best calculated to envelope and disguise the figure.

The Ambassador, instructed by the President, held the magnificent square box of gold adorned with jewels, in which was inclosed the King of England's letter to the Emperor, between both hands, lifted above his head, and in that manner ascending the few steps that led to the throne, and bending on one knee presented the box, with a short address, to his imperial Majesty, who, graciously receiving it with his own hands, (a mark of peculiar favour) placed it by his side, and courteously replied to his Excellency in terms expressive of the satisfaction he felt at this testimony which his Britannic Majesty thus gave him of his esteem and good will, and his earnest desire that harmony should ever prevail between them. After a little more conversation, the Emperor presented a valuable gem to his Excellency, who, on his [illegible] laid before his Majesty all the presents

which he had brought with him, both on his own behalf, and on the behalf of his sovereign. All these his Majesty condescendingly received, and gave others in return for them.

An interpreter being indispensable, the conversation was necessarily tedious, and the Emperor enquired if any one in his Excellency's train could speak Chinese: his page, a boy of thirteen, had made some proficiency in the language, and upon being led up to the throne, his Majesty took from his own girdle a small yellow silk bag which he usually carried about his person for holding betel, which he appeared to chew, and presented it to him as a mark of peculiar favour.

After this the English Ambassador and the two persons who accompanied him, were conducted to cushions, on which they sat down. They were placed on the left hand side of the throne, which, according to the Chinese customs, is considered the place of honour. The Tartar Princes, and the Envoys from other states were next received by the Emperor, and after these ceremonies were over, every person sat down on cushions laid in due order round the tent, each person maintaining his place with as much precision as before. Small tables calculated to accommodate two people were then laid down before them, and exhibited a sumptuous feast; the dishes upon each table were not, however, spread out according to the European custom, but were piled up one upon another. A table was placed likewise for his

Majesty before the throne, and he seemed to enjoy the feast as much as any of his guests. Tea was also served to him, but instead of being brought in a pile on his table, all the various dishes and cups were carried into him one after another, and each was presented to him by an attendant, who held his burden lifted up above his head. During the whole time of the banquet the utmost silence prevailed: no conversation was heard among the guests, no bustle among the attendants; there was a calmness, and a solemn pomp in the whole scene, such as on similar occasions is quite foreign to European habits.

The Emperor failed not to pay particular attention to the Ambassador; sent him several dishes from his own table, and presented him with his own hands a goblet of warm Chinese wine, in flavour not unlike Madeira.

When the festival was over, his Majesty rose from his throne, and took his departure; the procession being conducted in the same manner as on his arrival.

Soon after his Excellency's return to his own residence, he received from the Emperor presents of silks, china, and tea, for himself and all the gentlemen of his suite: of these the latter particularly excited their curiosity—the tea was mixed with a glutinous matter, like gum, by which it was made into the consistence of a paste, and was then rolled up into balls of different sizes. This gum dissolves in the boiling water, and does not affect the flavour o

considered a great delicacy, and is very much prized by the Chinese. His Majesty frequently sent the Ambassador presents also of the finest fruits, amongst which were some white grapes of a very uncommon kind, being, in size, fully equal to, and of the same shape as, the largest gooseberries.

The time was now fixed for the return of the Embassy to Pekin, and they set out by the same road that they had travelled before. The Emperor was expected shortly to return thither, and his Excellency determined as soon after as he could get all matters arranged, to take his leave of the capital of China, and proceed on his way to Canton.—This, he told Captain Blisset, was his present intention, and as he understood that he (Captain Blisset) proposed to visit southern China, it would make him happy if he would join in his suite, which he thought would facilitate his journey very much.

This offer, as may be supposed, was gladly accepted of, and our traveller was pleased that his stay at Pekin was likely to be somewhat prolonged, as it would give him a farther opportunity of informing himself of the habits and customs of this singular people.

The Chinese mode of printing, particularly, excited his curiosity; for, instead of metal types, composed of separate letters, and p[illegible] *together* to form words, and these being *arranged* as to form lines, he found that [illegible]

work printed is first engraved on thin boards, each of which is the size of two pages: and as the paper is too thin to receive impression on both sides, the board when wet with the ink is stamped down on it, and thus two pages are struck off at once; the paper is then folded together, with the blank sides touching each other. When sewed into a book, the fold forms the outer edge of the leaves, which thus is double, for as there is nothing printed within, they say there is no occasion to cut them; while all the single edges, contrary to the European mode of book-binding, are stitched together, and form the back of the volume. After the edition is worked off, the boards are collected together; and it is usual for the author to mention in the preface of the book, where they are deposited, in case a second edition should be called for.

The moveable types, such as are used in Great Britain, it would be quite impossible to introduce into China; for, although, with practice, an expert hand finds little or no difficulty in putting together the words of the English language, which are composed of twenty-five letters only; yet it is obvious that for a language that is made up of 80,000 different characters, such a method could not be carried into execution: no man could have 80,000 different kinds of letters laid out before him, and attempt to sort them into words, without finding insurmountable difficulties and confusion

In the art of printing, therefore, it appears they are far behind Great Britain, whilst in some others they have long surpassed us.—Amongst these, may be enumerated that of carving and inlaying ivory, and until lately, might also be added that of making China. Our own country has, however, of late years made such rapid improvements in that art, that we may now profess ourselves, at least, equal to them, except, perhaps, in one particular, that the colours in their china are said to be of a brighter hue, and more durable than those of English manufacture. There is not a manufactory of glass in the whole empire. The only supply they have of that commodity, they obtain by their commerce with Europe. At Canton they have learned something of its use, for though they do not understand the method of fusing the rough ingredients, and converting them by the proper process into glass, there are persons there who make a trade of buying up all broken pieces, which they melt and form into new shapes for sale.

The Chinese are remarkable for their ingenuity in the invention of tools. Every traveller will observe in other countries an evident similarity between the handicraft tools used by different nations, causing the strongest probability that those which had been adopted by one people had served as models for another to copy by; but in China every thing, even their commonest tools, seem quite peculiar to themselves; their bellows, their anvil, their plan

are unlike those of any other country, and whether better or worse suited to the purpose, are evidently the original, unassisted, invention of the people themselves; and such must ever be the case with a people who hold so little intercourse with other countries.

It is well known of the Chinese that they never suffer strangers to come from foreign countries and settle among them; and it is also another well known fact they never, or rarely emigrate from their own native land. To this latter cause may be attributed the overflowing population of the country, which, according to the appearance that Pekin presented to our travellers, seemed to be almost greater than the country could maintain.

But the Chinese are a nation more of husbandmen than of manufacturers; their redundant population not permitting them to leave the smallest spot of ground uncultivated; even the mountainous tracts, which, to an European would seem almost inaccessible, are tilled and converted into profitable land wherever this can be effected by human labour. For the same reason, every thing that can possibly be made use of for food, is turned to account. Most kinds of animals are eaten by the Chinese; even those which appear to us of the most loathsome nature. "Why Sir," said William, "in this hungry country it seems to me as if nothing that has life has any chance of escape. *I see even frogs* hanging up in the stalls for *sale; and the* other day I met a man going

through the street with a long pole across his shoulders, to each end of which he had a creel slung, and in one was fixed a tub of water, with his fish in it—but, above all things, what do you think was in the other? a parcel of little cur dogs, all alive!! and a man who was with me told me that these were actually for the market, and that the Chinese eat dogs as readily as we do fowl: but I think the worst thing of all that they do in the way of eating, is what I was told last night when I was going to kill an ugly beetle that was crawling about my room, that the nation make use of those things for food—they are called cockroaches—and he said a great many of their savoury sauces, which they use as we do anchovy sauce, are made of these animals. My informant was servant to one of the English officers here, and he and I agreed no country was like our own for good living to both rich and poor."

William's observation was a very just one; and no one knows half the value of his own country, until he witnesses the privations that other nations are subject to; the man, for instance, who lives in Ireland on potatoes and milk, and thinks his life a very hard one, does not consider how infinitely better his lot is, than that of the poor Chinese, whose fare is made up of such coarse materials. Nor does this nation differ from us in any way more than in their dress. In every rank of life, the form or fashion is nearly similar, being invariably loose and wide, so as to disguise the

figure: amongst the rich it is usually composed of silk, and the poor make use of coloured cotton. White dresses of any kind are only worn for mourning: and these are never considered too much soiled for use, as the people make it a rule to give up every appearance (even in cleanliness) of personal ease or ornament during the time that their period of mourning lasts. Indeed, the Chinese give themselves but little trouble in washing or making clean either their clothing or any thing else. Their dress is usually composed of a dark coloured stuff, which, they say, does not require washing; and they spread no sheets on their beds, nor ever lay cloths on their tables. They have no soap, though they endeavour to make up for the want of it, by having different mixtures for washing the skin, and by the use of potash for their cotton and woollen stuffs, whenever they do wash them.

In the course of a few days all political matters being arranged between the Emperor and the Ambassador, and he having received his dispatches for the British Government rolled up in a piece of yellow silk; his Excellency and suite prepared to leave Pekin for Canton. On the morning of the appointed day, Ho Choong-taung came down to the Ambassador's residence to take leave of him; and every thing being now finally arranged, our travellers joining in the Ambassador's suite, all set out, some in carriages, some on horseback for the village

of Tong-choo-foo, distant about ten miles, where they were to embark upon the river Pei-ho. It was his Excellency's intention to pursue his journey as much as possible by water, and by sailing down the river Pei-ho as far as its junction with the Eu-ho, and from thence pursuing the course of the latter river, he would be enabled to get upon the grand or imperial canal, which extends down in a southerly direction through the eastern provinces of China for a space of above 500 miles; and for the rest of his journey he judged he would be able to pursue it almost the whole way to Canton by water, along the different rivers which flow from south to north, throughout that part of the empire, at least with the interval of some short land journeys between; the Emperor having issued orders, that every accommodation should be provided for his Excellency and suite throughout every part of the Chinese empire which they were to visit; and having also deputed one of the principal courtiers to accompany them on their way; Their road from Pekin by Tong-choo-foo, lay over a vast extent of flat country, called the plain of Pee-tche lee; and on their arrival there, they found accommodation provided for them in an extensive building, which had once been used as a temple. Troops were drawn out in front of this building clad in various uniforms, which to the eyes of the British officers appeared more suited to the stage than to the army. Many

of them wore quilted petticoats and jackets, and yellow satin boots with soles of thick paper. All the mandarines residing at Tong-choo-foo came to pay their respects to his Excellency, and in the evening the town was illuminated with coloured lamps. The next morning the whole party embarked on the river Pei-ho. The barges provided for their conveyance were full seventy feet in length and about fifteen in breadth, and so flat bottomed and shallow, that they scarcely drew ten inches of water; this was, however, an advantage, as the weather was very dry and the river so low, that in a few days more, it would have been too shallow to float even these boats. They were furnished with masts and sails, and when there happened to be but little wind, it was not uncommon for the sailors to make use of two large oars of such a size, that it required several men to work each of them; this is a labour which they seem always to undergo with a sort of cheerfulness and pleasure, that was quite an amusement to the strangers, keeping time with their strokes to a lively air, sung by the master of the boat, and all the men joining loudly in the chorus, and Captain Blisset remarked, that the same tune was sung on board every boat in the river.—The effect of this, in the stillness of night was *exceedingly* pleasing; and though an hundred boats were to pass them on the river, the same song was heard from all. When, however,

the wind was against them, or they got into an unfavourable current, they were obliged to have recourse to a more laborious mode of proceeding; a long rope attached to the boat, in the manner used with our canal boats, was thrown out to the river bank, to the end of which were fastened cords formed into loops, of which each man taking hold of one places it across his breast, and ten or fifteen of the boatmen being thus yoked, they drag the vessel along, moving together in one line abreast, and walking in measured time to the sound of a loud chaunt. This is what they call tracking boat, and it is such laborious work as in our country would be only put on cattle to perform, but in China human labour is never spared. The country through which they passed was level and fertile, full of valleys and highly cultivated; the millet fields extending down to the water's edge, and the crowd of barges floating down the river, had a most singular and grotesque appearance;—of these one was allotted to the Ambassador himself, and another to the Chinese courtier who was in attendance on him, and whose name Sunta Zhin afforded as much amusement to William as he did to all the other Englishmen; others were allotted to the several British officers, some others to the mandarines and the guards attendant upon the embassy, and many more were of course occupied by their attendants, and also engaged in conveying all the baggage, and luggage of every description. This little fleet

sailed smoothly on its course. The inhabitants along the Pei-ho bore strong marks of poverty in their dwellings and apparel, but yet their general appearance testified that they were not pinched for the necessaries of life; nor was their poverty owing to the barrenness of their lands, for their own industry had fertilized them; but the population was too crowded to admit such a portion of ground to each family, as could supply the comforts of life.—A very small portion of animal food serves the Chinese peasantry as a relish to their vegetable diet, and even the use of milk, cheese and butter is very little known amongst them; the few heads of cattle they do rear are principally for market sale, nor is their meat good, for they principally feed it on the straw of corn chopped as small as chaff; as the ground is in a constant state of tillage, ploughs of the most simple construction are found sufficient to penetrate it; and where the soil is particularly light, it is not uncommon to see men and women yoked to the plough, and dragging it along.

The first town of any note that they reached was Tien-sing, situated at the junction of two rivers, these are the Pie-ho down which our travellers were coming, but which here suddenly turns off to the eastward, and the *Eu-ho*, or precious river, which flowing from south to north falls into the Pei-ho. The town, as our travellers approached it, presented a very singular appearance;—the governor's

palace stands on a projecting point, from whence it commands the prospect of a broad expanse of water, produced by the union of the rivers, and which is almost covered with vessels of different sizes; across this basin was a bridge of boats for the convenience of the people, but which occasionally separated to let vessels pass; along the quays were some temples and other handsome edifices, but the rest consisted chiefly of shops for the retail of goods, together with warehouses and magazines for merchandize stores. The town is built on the side of a hill, overhanging the river, and seems to rise from the water's edge, the streets being cut in terraces one above the other. The arrival of Europeans here, and especially of a British Ambassador, with his train of attendants, and the fleet of boats accompanying him, was a sight of such novelty as to attract crowds of people from all the neighbouring parts of the country; the crowds were immense, not only on the highest ground, but down to the foot of the hill, and many hundreds were actually standing in the water in order to gain a nearer view of the strangers.—Yet amidst all the eagerness of their curiosity, the people preserved the greatest degree of order and regularity, not the least dispute seemed to take place among them; and from a sense of mutual accommodation, each man took off his large straw hat that it should not obstruct his neighbour's view, though this exposed his head to a burning sun. The custom of taking off his

as a mark of respect is not known in China, though no people in the world are more abject to their superiors; they will bow and kneel with the greatest submission, but the custom of uncovering the head is unknown to them.

The villages which they passed, were many of them large enough to constitute well sized towns, but none of them are considered of any importance by the Chinese, except those which are walled. In small villages, the houses are usually of only one story high, and built of mud or else formed of wicker work, overlaid with a sort of mortar or plaister, and both are roofed, either with a thatch of straw or a covering of sods. In large towns the houses are built of bricks, and these almost invariably were of a blue colour like slates, which Captain Blisset learned was caused by their being dried in kilns, heated by wood fires.—Like those already described, these dwellings have likewise only one story, they are roofed with tiles, and the windows are very small, and made of paper instead of glass, very little iron is used, scarcely even a nail in any of their buildings, and the floors are not of boards, but of flags of bare earth; the houses have generally a small court round them, enclosed by frames of wicker work, and the walls which surround the towns are, for the most part, higher than the houses they enclose; these walls, be the figure or extent of the town what it may, invariably form a square, and face the four points of the compass; each wall

has a gate of entrance to the town in it, and these are distinguished as the north gate, the south gate, &c. Their public buildings have broad projecting roofs, the outer edge of which rests upon a row of wooden pillars placed in front of the house; nor is it any thing unusual to see one of the principal of these edifices with double and even treble roofs raised by upright wooden supporters, a few feet one above the other.—Shops and ordinary dwelling houses have no pillars in front, nor projecting or double roofs, but the former always have two tall poles set up before the door, with a cross board nailed to the top of each, these are painted bright red, and on the board in gilt letters, may be seen the name and trade of the proprietor.

On the eleventh day of their voyage, they entered upon the province of Shan-tung—exhibiting a fine level tract of country, in which they found the cultivation of cotton carried on to a considerable extent: adjoining to the fields of cotton, there were others in which the indigo plant was cultivated, the blue die of which is used throughout the whole empire for the cotton dresses worn by the common people. At the town of Lin-sin-choo where our travellers now arrived, is the opening or commencement of the imperial canal; near to this spot stands a large building nine stories high, each of which is built a size smaller than the one beneath it, and each has a broad projecting roof, so that the whole edifice appears as if it was

composed of a number of different houses, piled one upon the other, the smallest being placed at top, and is supposed to have been erected in commemoration of the finishing of the canal.

This work, the greatest and most ancient of its kind, traverses the eastern provinces of China for the space of five hundred miles, not only through heights and over vallies, but across rivers and lakes. The ground which originally lay between the bed of this canal and that of the river, was cut down to the depth of thirty feet in order to let the waters of the former flow into the latter. Their descent is afterwards checked occasionally by flood gates thrown across the canal; these are simple in their construction, easily managed, and kept in repair at a trifling expense; they consist merely of a few planks let down separately one upon the other by groves cut into the sides of two solid piers of stone, that are placed opposite each other, one at each bank, the space between them being wide enough to admit a passage for the largest vessels employed on the canal.

The embassy had not proceeded far on its way down the canal, when a crowd of people having assembled to gaze at the strangers, great numbers of them got into the boats which were lying there, and the projecting stern of one of them being overloaded by the crowd collected upon it, it gave way, and several persons were precipitated into the water. The struggles and shrieks of those who were unable to

swim, loud and violent as they were, did not, however seem, in the least, to excite the attention of such of the spectators as were safe, to call any about to the assistance of the unfortunate people who were in danger of being drowned; one however, at length towed towards the wreck, but seemed more eager to pick up the hat of one of the men than to save the life of him who had worn it; notwithstanding this however, Captain Blisset did not observe that any of the people were lost; some scrambled up into the boats that were nearest them, and those who could swim reached the banks in safety, but he was struck very much with the coldness and insensibility which this incident shewed to exist in the character of the Chinese; a people who hold the ties of relationship so binding, that even the most distant connexions are regarded by them as one and the same family with themselves; yet such is their want of liveliness of quick feeling, that crowds of them remained stupidly gazing at the strangers, while the boat lay overturned before them and the people were shrieking in the water.

Some miles further down the canal, they came to where the river Luen falls into it, with a rapid stream, running in a line directly at right angles with the canal; that is to say, the latter, as has been already mentioned, lies north and south, while the river flows from east to west, it consequently falls in on the easter side of the canal; a strong bulwark of sto

supports the opposite or western bank, and the waters of Luen striking with force against it, part of these follow the northern and part the southern course of the canal. Such is the strength of the eddy thus made by the meeting of these waters, that it is said, were a bundle of sticks tied up and thrown into it, they would quickly be rent asunder, and carried off in opposite directions.

The embassy now arrived at the palace, where the Lent-ze, or celebrated fishing bird of China is bred, and instructed in the art and practice of supplying its owner with fish in great abundance. This bird is a species of pelican, its back and head brown, the throat and under part of the body white, and spotted with brown, the eyes a fine blue and the bill yellow.

On a large lake, close adjoining the eastern bank of the canal, are thousands of small boats and rafts, built entirely for this species of fishery; on each boat or raft are ten or twelve of these birds, which, at a signal from the owner, plunge into the water, and it is astonishing to see the enormous size of the fish which they bring up, grasped within their bills: so well trained are they, that no restraint is necessary on the part of the master to prevent them from swallowing any part of their prey, except what he pleases to give them afterwards.

The boatmen live near the borders of the lake, and their rafts are so light that they often

carry them home, birds and all, after the days work is over, and bring them back again when they are going to resume it.

Their course still led them through cultivated plains; where the soil was dry, the fields were cropped with millet, wheat, and other grains; and where it was marshy, the rice was growing in great abundance. The Chinese are particularly skilful in the art of raising this grain: having first prepared the ground, and levelled it, by means of an upright harrow, with wooden pegs set in the lower end of it, and drawn over the field by a buffalo, they sow the seed very thickly, which they have previously brought to a state of vegetation, by steeping it in wet dung: the next thing they do is to overflow the land with water, where their seed is sown, and this is accomplished either by channels leading from a neighbouring river, or else by means of a machine called the Persian wheel, so named from having been first invented in that country. It consists of a large wheel, perhaps twenty feet in diameter, at the end of every spoke of which are hung small buckets: this wheel is set in a river, like a water-mill, and is turned by the force of the current; as the wheel goes round, the buckets fill, and empty themselves into a channel cut from the borders of the river, in such a direction as to receive their contents; this channel running from hence to the rice fields, carries a sufficient supply of water to overflow an extensive tract of land. In a few days the

shoots appear above the water, which is then suffered to drain off, and after the plants have attained the height of six or seven inches, the labourers all repair to the fields, and pull them up by the roots as if they were weeds; having done so, they cut off the tops of the blades; each plant is then put down separately, sometimes in small furrows turned with the plough, and sometimes in holes made in rows by a setting-stick, as a gardener would line out plants in his garden. Water is then brought over them a second time, and again suffered to subside, as the crop becomes full grown.—When ripe, it is reaped with a hook, of which the edge is notched like that of a saw, and the sheaves are placed in heaps on frames which the men carry on their shoulders by means of poles, and thus convey the grain to the barn where it is to be threshed: this is done either with a flail, or else by striking the sheaves against the edge of an upright plank, and sometimes they have a large tub, and beat it against its edge, the vessel serving as a receiver for the grain. They have then various methods for taking off the husk that still remains to it; the most usual of which is to put the grain into a stone vessel, the shape of a large earthen crock, and stir it and strike it repeatedly with a long shaped stone, in the form of a pear, with a handle in it, and this they do in such a manner as not to bruise or injure the grain, but only to disengage it from the husk. But the most laborious part of the task

is yet to come: as soon as one crop is finished, they immediately begin to prepare the ground for a second, the first part of which operation is to pull up all the stubble with the hand; this they collect into small heaps, burn it and scatter the ashes on the field, and then go over the same process as before. It is not usual to keep the same land always in rice, for that soil is found equally suitable for raising an excellent crop of sugar cane—using only the precaution of keeping off the water after the young canes appear above the surface.

Our travellers now approached that part of the country where lies the extensive lake of Wee-chaung-hoo; like that which they had already passed, it lay on the borders of the canal, from which it was only divided by a high and strong embankment of earth. The view of this lake, when first they saw it at sunrise, was extremely interesting, being covered with fishing boats of various sizes and forms, moved along by all the various modes of navigation that poles, paddles, oars, and sails could supply. Fishing, therefore, forms a considerable part of the occupation of the people who live near this lake, and its banks are richly bordered with their farms and their wooden houses. Various modes of fishing are employed by them, of which that by nets is the most general. Another, however, is more singular, and practiced by them with great success—to one side of the boat a flat board painted white is fixed lengthways, its lower

edge reaching down into the water. On moonlight nights the boat is so placed that the painted board is turned to the moon, whose light striking on the white surface, gives to it the appearance of shining water, on which the fish are tempted to leap, and the boatmen suddenly raising the board with a string, turn the fish into the boat. Every successful method of catching fish is followed with eagerness by the Chinese, to make up for the scarcity of flesh meat. The larger kind of the latter the peasantry have little opportunity of ever tasting, unless such as die by accident or disease; in such cases, so great is the rarity, that it matters little to them whether it be ox, or camel, sheep or ass, it is equally acceptable. These people know no distinction between good and bad meat; for, as has been before mentioned, even dogs and cats are used by them as food. Water-fowl, as well as fish, are likewise sought after with eagerness, and are taken by a very curious device: empty jars are thrown into the lake, and let to lie upon the surface of the water until the birds become familiar to their appearance. The fisherman then wades into the water with one of these vessels upon his head, and the bird not being the least alarmed at the sight of it, he is enabled to approach so close, as gently to raise his hand, and catch it by drawing it by the legs under water; this he accomplishes without rousing the other birds; *and he is thus* enabled to go through the lake, *seldom failing* in accomplishing his purpose

and putting them into a large bag which he carries along with him.

The party now arrived at the junction of the canal with a very large river called the Yellow River. All Chinese names have some meaning in them applicable to either the appearance, quality or situation of the place, or thing mentioned; and this river has received its name from the quantity of yellow earth, along its banks, and of mud of the same colour of which its bed is principally formed.

The amazing swiftness with which the yellow river runs at the place where the barges of the Embassy were to cross it, rendered it a very hazardous undertaking. The wind was, however, fair, they were towed by light sailing boats, and had the assistance of their own oars besides. Some stemmed the current without losing much ground, while others were rapidly hurried by it to a considerable distance down the river, and had to be dragged or tracked back again to the opening of the continuation of the canal, with the greatest labour that can be conceived.

The extent of the country through which the yellow river flows, and the quantity of water it discharges into the sea, are hardly surpassed by any other in the world, except, perhaps, some of the rivers of America.

The sources of the Yellow River are two lakes, situated amongst the mountains, in that part of Tartary known by the name of Kokonor; they lie about the 35th degree of north latitude.

and 100 degrees of east longitude. The river, after winding through this province of Tartary, first in an eastern direction, for about 240 miles, then north-west for 100, and again, easterly for 250, at length enters the empire of China, at the province of Shen-see, and then running in a northerly direction parallel to the great wall of China, it suddenly turns and crosses it at the 39th degree of latitude; here it enters again into Tartary, and continuing to flow still to the northward, up to the 41st degree of latitude, makes altogether a northerly course of 400 miles. Numberless streams fall into it from the heights of Tartary: continuing afterwards easterly, 200 miles, it again crosses the great wall, and taking, at last, a southern course for about double the last distance, once more flows through the provinces of China; when suddenly it turns to the eastward in the province of Kiang-nan; and after a further course of 560 miles discharges its immense volume of water into the sea, which forms part of the eastern boundary of the empire, and to which it gives the name of the Yellow Sea. This circuit is fully equal to an extent of 2150 miles. The distance from the sea to where it is crossed by the canal is not more than 70 miles; its width in that part scarcely exceeds a mile, and the depth of water not more than nine or ten feet, though the current is so strong that it may be compared to the flowing of a tide, and runs at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour.

In three days after the Embassy had crossed the Yellow River, they came to where the canal is traversed in a similar manner by another which is called the Blue River, and which nearly equals it both in magnitude and in the length of its course. These two great rivers take their rise in the same mountains of Tartary, and within a short distance of each other, frequently pass almost close to each other, then again branch off hundreds of miles asunder, and finally discharge themselves into the same sea, within two degrees of latitude of one another.

In order to gain the canal, or the further side of the Blue River, the vessels had to sail a little way down its northern shore, cross it, and return up the southern side. In the river were several small wooded islands, and rocks rising abruptly out of the water. The waves rolled like those of the sea, and many porpoises and other large sea animals were seen leaping amidst them. On one of those islands which rose almost to the height of a mountain, perpendicularly out of the water, the Emperor formerly built a summer palace, which, however, he now rarely visits.

Our travellers now entered the province of Kiang-nan, of which the town of Nankin is the capital, so celebrated for its coloured cotton manufacture, to which it has given that name. They found the lands on each side of the canal chiefly cultivated with that particular species of the cotton shrub from which it is made.

The cotton bursts from a large pod, and has in its natural state that rich colour which it preserves when woven into the cloth, well known in Europe by the name of Nankeen.

On this part of the canal, several bridges are thrown over it, all built of good solid stone masonry; and in order to pass under these, it was necessary to take down the masts of the vessels; their places, however, were supplied by two long poles placed upright, one at each side of the boat, and the ends *being met* at top, they stood exactly like the arms of a pair of tongs, to these the sails were affixed, and the masts were not again used until they came upon a more open part of the canal.

Soon after this they arrived at the large and populous city of Soo-choo-foo, whose streets were divided by a number of small canals which branched off from the imperial canal, and traversed the town in all directions: over the entrance to each of these canals, stone bridges were thrown, and the houses appeared well built, and handsomely decorated. They turned into one of those small canals, and sailed up through the town; great crowds of the inhabitants came to gaze at the strangers, many of whom, from their costly silk dresses, appeared to be among the wealthier classes. Here, also, our travellers observed that the women seemed to live much less secluded than in any other part of China they had yet visited, many ladies *fairer in* their complexions, and dressed in bet*ter taste*, were to be seen amongst the crowd,

and were distinguished by long ear-rings, made of precious stones, and black satin caps, ornamented with jewels.

It was in this part of the country that our travellers first observed the tallow tree, whose fruit yields a kind of greasy substance, from which the natives make a great proportion of their candles. This fruit is in appearance like a large berry, which, as it ripens, divides itself into three parts, each of which contains a kernel, and the grease is found adhering to the shells of these kernels, and is extracted from them by pressure; it is found to make very good and prime candles, and these are frequently painted a red colour.

All this part of the canal was from 60 to 100 yards wide, its banks faced with stone through the whole length of a rich and beautiful country, of about ninety miles in extent, which lay between the town last mentioned, and the place where this great work finally terminates, the city of Hanchoofoo.

This town is situated between the basin of the imperial canal, and the river Chen-tang-chaung, upon which our travellers now prepared to embark, in order to pursue their course still to the southward. The boats here provided for them, were nearly similar to those they just left. A number of small craft of all kinds that were crowded on the river, afforded them much amusement as they passed along; these were all conducted without the least confusion; the watermen seemed extremely

expert, and it was not unusual to see a large boat entirely managed by one man, who rowed, steered, sailed, and smoked his pipe at the same time: he held the sheet or strong rope belonging to the sail with one hand, steered the boat with the other, and with his foot he pulled an oar, which he feathered at every stroke as neatly as could be done by the hand.

A brisk and favourable breeze enabled the barges to make swift progress for some time, even against the current of the river, which takes its rise to the southward, and flows towards the north-east. Our travellers must now be understood to be sailing up, and not down the course of the river, of which the mouth is a few miles further to the northward than where they embarked on it. They pursued their courses by this river; it winds through hills richly wooded with the purple leafed tallow tree, the large leafed chesnut, beautifully mixed with the deep green of the larch, the tea tree, and the camphor tree. This was the first time our travellers had seen the tea tree growing, and Captain Blisset received from the master of his boat a very satisfactory account of its cultivation, for the detail of which the reader is referred to the account of remarkable trees.

A remarkable proof, said Captain Blisset's informant, of the character which our countrymen enjoy for commercial integrity, is furnished by the dealings of this trade. When the Indiamen arrive at Canton, whither you are

now proceeding for a cargo of tea, the Hong merchants in whom the management of the trade with England is vested go aboard, and receive the invoices of the bales, mentioning what they contain; these have been made out in London by the Company's agents, and the seals then put on and not broken during the voyage. The merchants accordingly send them ashore, and immediately dispatches them to the different parts of the interior without any further examination, quite satisfied that each package contains every article that the account states, and they even pass through the hands of a great many owners unexamined, before they reach the retailer, nor is there an instance on record of the confidence they thus manifest in the British being misplaced; but there is another proof of the good faith with which the traffic is carried on, which deserves to be mentioned. The tea which is sent to England comes from various parts of China, and we may fear that many who sell it to the Hong merchant for exportation are not so scrupulously exact in their dealings as the East India Company. In consequence, many chests which, from the samples are supposed sound, contain but a quantity of rubbish, covered over by some of a superior quality. When this is discovered in London where each chest is opened and separately examined; it is immediately sent out into the middle of the Thames, and there emptied into the water. I should rather have supposed, said William, it was sent back

to be exchanged, no replied the informant, a voucher is merely sent to certify that so many chests were emptied into the river, having been found inferior to the sample; and upon this document the quantity thus destroyed is made good in the next shipment;—a doubt never arising in their minds that the representation made is different from the truth.

As the whole course of the river, up which the embassy were now sailing, does not exceed two hundred miles, they found, in a few days, that they had arrived so near its source, that it was here no longer navigable. It takes its rise in a range of mountains situated in the southern part of the province of Kiang-nan; and as our travellers advanced, these lofty hills seemed towering over their heads. Men-ta-ghen, the Chinese courtier, who was accompanying the Embassy, now informed his Excellency, that by performing a short land journey, and crossing these mountains, they would arrive at another river on which they could embark, since like that which they were now quitting, it takes its rise also to the southward; and they might, in a similar manner, pursue their way by its course as far as it was navigable.

To this the Ambassador assented, but a considerable difficulty occurred in obtaining any mode of conveyance for so large a party; the road was not passable for wheel-carriages, and a sufficient number of horses for so large a party could not easily be procured in a country.

where none are used for agriculture, where the poor travel on foot, and the rich in palanquins.

The Ambassador's guards in their fine plumes of feathers and gay uniforms were considered by the natives as gentlemen, and, as they said, must also be carried on palanquins as well as his Excellency himself. The deficiency of horses and of palanquins was supplied by chairs to which poles were fastened, and those poles carried on mens' shoulders. Several of these men, with their tattered cloths and straw hats and sandals, instead of shoes, looked so poor and so much weaker than those whom they carried, that many of the travellers felt unwilling to put them to so much labour, and preferred performing the journey on foot. The road was first over rising grounds, and afterwards in narrow valleys, but soon they came to where it led over marshy lands, in many parts under water; in order to traverse which, it had been found necessary to make an artificial road by building a great wall across it of sufficient thickness to form a commodious foot way.

Throughout the whole of this land journey, in a remote part of the country, far removed from all great roads and thorough-fares, not a mile was travelled without meeting a village, nor a spot observed except on mere rocks and inaccessible heights that was not cultivated.—In many parts the earth seemed to have been scraped off the mountain rocks where a thin

coating of soil had grown over them, and this was carried down into the valleys to add to the depth of soil there.

Where the face of a mountain was too perpendicular to be accessible, it was formed into terraces, one above the other, with cultivated fields between; these were principally of various kinds of grain, a sort of sweet potato, onions, carrots, turnips, and a variety of other vegetables. On the low marshy lands our travellers were particularly struck by the ingenious method they saw adopted for the rendering even these almost uninhabitable spots serviceable; rafts were formed of canes and reeds matted together, and being laid down on the surface of the wet ground, and a thick layer of earth laid over them, the seeds were then sown, a method of cultivation which is found to produce good crops of vegetables.

Though inns are common in the great roads of China, so few travellers pass through this part of the country, that no houses were to be found which were fit for the reception of the travellers in the town where they arrived at night. It was situated on the border of the river on which they were to embark the next day; and they were obliged to ask for accommodation in a large building used as an academy or sort of school, in which the young men of that district of the country are educated. This was readily granted them, and on the following morning they again set forward, and embarked in boats larger (that is deeper)

and more commodious than those they had used before.

The country through which they passed was similar in every respect to that which they had hitherto traversed; and after pursuing their course up the river, as far as it was navigable, they had again a second land journey to pursue. This they got over in the same manner as before, having to cross some steep mountains, over which the road in many parts had been made by cutting passages through the solid rock.

They at length arrived at a large town, situated on the river Pekiang, which from hence flows southerly, through an extent of about two hundred and sixty miles to the city of Canton, our travellers place of destination; this city stands about eighty miles from the mouth of the river, which still continues its course in the same direction, until at length it falls into the sea of China on the southern coast of the empire.

Canton is the principal seaport town of China, and being the only port of the whole Chinese dominions which is open to Europeans, it is therefore from the extent of its commerce so much the resort of strangers, that it may be said, there are almost as many foreigners as natives resident in the city.

For some days before our travellers reached Canton, they perceived all that difference which is to be found in the habits and appearance between the people who reside in the vicinity of populous cities, and those who live in more

remote quarters. Many boats of burden which were sailing down the river were laden with goods for exportation for England and other parts of Europe, and frequently they heard the English language spoken by persons passing in the boats or walking on the river side. The river was crowded with vessels of all descriptions; many of them were long rafts, eighty or one hundred feet in length, made of branches of camphor and larch trees strongly bound together, and with tall masts erected down the center of them, to which a few sails were set when the breeze was favourable, and when it happened to be contrary to their course, these vessels were tracked along in the same manner as has been before described.

Upon these rafts, the owner and his family live entirely; they have small sheds or huts erected on them which serve them as dwelling houses, and by placing a layer of earth over a part of the raft, they are enabled to raise a crop of vegetables for their own use in the same way that is adopted by the inhabitants of marshy lands. The children seemed quite accustomed to this mode of life, and were running about and playing in their floating nursery, as freely as if on land.

At length our party had the pleasure of arriving at their place of destination at an early hour in the morning; well pleased to find themselves at this celebrated city which they had so long desired to see, and

William rejoiced to be in any place where he could hear his own language spoken.

The city and suburbs are situated mostly on the eastern bank of the Pekiang river, and spacious and convenient residences were provided for the Embassy; some of which to our travellers' great satisfaction were fitted up in the English manner, with glass windows and fire-places.

The streets of Canton are long, straight, and very narrow, some of the largest of them hardly exceed fifteen or twenty feet in width; but are kept clean and well paved. The houses are brick and only one story high, but almost all of them have either two or three courts at the rere for mercantile warehouses, or for storehouses. Where neither of these are required, the apartments built off these court-yards are set apart for the residence of the female part of the family; almost every house has a shop where trade is carried on, and the streets are continually crowded by its numerous population, although no foreigners are allowed to reside within the city walls, or even to enter them, without an order of admission from a Mandarine. The suburbs or outlets of the town, are, however very extensive, and are principally inhabited by the strangers who are excluded from the central parts of the town. The walls of Canton are about five miles in extent, and have several entrance gates, to each of which there is a guard-house.

Vast quantities of merchandize are continually exported and imported by the Chinese themselves in their traffic with various eastern nations, and a very extensive commercial intercourse is now carried on by Europeans, especially the British. The *principal* articles of trade, of the latter, are tea, to the extent of from 25 to 30 millions of pounds yearly, nankeen, silks, mother of pearl, tortoise shell, and china: there are also many other articles of commerce: while the imports from Great Britain and her eastern settlements are woollen cloths, cotton, furs, watches, and betel-nut, which is used for chewing, as tobacco is, on account of its pleasant flavour.

The factories of the different European powers which trade with China, extend along the banks of the river standing quite distinct from each other, and having their respective flags displayed. Each consisted of at least five houses; but the factory belonging to the British, surpasses all the others in size and magnificence: a broad parade extends along the river in front of the factories, whither the Europeans resort to enjoy the cool of the evening, and in the society of the well informed men who composed these commercial establishments, the party forgot the fatigues they had undergone. Their stay, however, was necessarily short: two English ships of war were in waiting for the Ambassador's arrival, and as his duty required him to embark without delay, his baggage was immediately conveyed

down the river to its mouth, where the vessels were at anchor. Captain Blisset had his choice of taking his passage in one of them to Calcutta, whither the Ambassador with great kindness offered to give him a passage, he himself being obliged to proceed thither, to confer with the Governor-General of India, upon the commerce of England with China. He had also the choice of embarking in one of the Americans, which was loading for New York: but after due reflection he decided for the former. We have not yet, said he to William, seen any of those places which lie north and west of Hindostan, and I should be sorry, when they are so convenient to us, to lose, perhaps, the only opportunity we shall ever enjoy of seeing them, so I will take advantage of the offer made to me, and at Calcutta we can see how far the Governor-General will assist my design of travelling through the northern parts of the Indian continent.

It will suffice to say that all things being soon ready for their embarkation, the Embassy set sail, and in due time arrived at Calcutta, which our travellers once again saw with something of the pleasure they would have felt in seeing their native country: it was a part of the British dominions: the society was mostly English, and the habits, making allowance for the difference of climate, were the same as they had been accustomed to.

Having satisfied his curiosity, during his former stay in this city, Captain Blisset did not

think it necessary to defer his departure longer than was sufficient for the necessary arrangements. He lost no time, therefore, in making due acknowledgments to the British Ambassador for his uniform kindness, and having communicated his wish to the Governor-General, he received his promise that every order should be given that could render his reception, at the different towns on his way, satisfactory. He now, also, on communicating his intention of setting out immediately, was informed, that the supreme council intended to make him bearer of private despatches to the British resident in Caubul, which would ensure him every possible convenience on the way.

In a few days, every thing being arranged for his departure, Captain Blisset and William set out from Calcutta, in two palanquins, intending to follow the course of the Ganges. They were escorted by two sepoys, or Indian soldiers, and followed by two native servants, carrying the light baggage, the rest having previously been sent on by water. The river along which they were now travelling, the Ganges, is one of the chief rivers in Asia. It rises in the Himalaya mountains, which lie to the north of Hindostan, in north lat. 31° and east long. 79° where it appears quite a small inconsiderable stream: it gradually, however, encreases in size as it pursues its course, which it does for 1500 miles, traversing the country in nearly a south-easterly direction, and so great is its magnitude, that even 500 miles from the place

where it falls into the sea, it is, during the rainy season, four miles broad, and sixty feet deep. The Ganges discharges itself into the ocean by no less than *nine* mouths, having parted into that number of streams. The water is considered wholesome, and by the natives is so highly esteemed that they carry it many hundred miles for the use of the sick and the wealthy.

For the first few days, their journey afforded them nothing particularly worthy of note. Their road led them along the bank of the river, which spread like a broad ocean before them. Rich plains skirted the course of the stream, covered with fine pasture, and interspersed with woods composed of timber trees of large size; on every side were to be seen a variety of birds of beautiful colours, and, amongst them, a small species of parrot, not bigger than a lark, with peacocks in abundance, the brilliant colours of whose plumage almost dazzle the eye in a bright sunshine.

At intervals of about eight or ten miles they arrived at resting places, where the palanquin-bearers laid down their burdens, and all stretched themselves under shady trees to rest.

The Indian towns cover a large space of ground, because the houses have almost all large gardens attached to them; besides this, consisting of one story only, the number of rooms that each family requires, occupies so much more space than if they were built one over the other.

Captain Blisset, after a journey of 460 miles, at length reached the town of Benares, which is situated on the northern bank of the river Ganges, and for its wealth, costly buildings, and number of its inhabitants, exceeding 600,000, is one of the most considerable towns in Hindostan. The bank of the river is entirely lined with stone, formed into flights of steps and adorned with numerous temples.

It was here that our travellers were afforded the melancholy spectacle, called by the natives a Sulla, of a Hindoo widow burning herself on the pile of her departed husband, as a testimony of her affection! They had been told that there are not less than eight hundred such scenes annually, but Captain Blisset knew that the influence of the British government had been exerted to check this barbarous and heart-rending custom; and he little thought that in the very neighbourhood of an English Judge, and almost in sight of a regiment of Sepoys, such a tragedy would be permitted. The widow was not more than seventeen years of age and extremely beautiful. Every argument was used by several of her relatives to dissuade her from the melancholy sacrifice. A European lady also, residing near Benares, implored her, with many tears, to consider the destitute condition in which she would leave her three children, the eldest not four years old. But even to this argument her reply was—He that made them will take care of them—nor could she be made to see that, in thus quitting them, she was vio-

lating the great law, which prevails throughout all ranks of living creatures, that of love to our offspring. At length the dreadful hour arrived. This young creature approached the pile, accompanied by her children, her parents and relatives; having previously taken a solemn leave of them, and distributed her jewels amongst them. The women appeared to be greatly affected, particularly her mother, but she herself, however extraordinary it may appear, was quite composed, and with smiles endeavoured to comfort them; she then advanced to the pile, and, and with great solemnity, walked around it; and having kissed the dead body of her husband, and saluted the spectators, mounted the pile, and, seating herself beside the corpse, set fire to the dry wood of which the pile was made. The materials being combustible, the whole was presently in a flame, but not until our travellers, who looked on with horror, had an opportunity of viewing, with astonishment, the unmoved countenance of the victim. At one time, indeed, William thought he heard a faint scream proceeding from the pile, perhaps at the moment that the flames had reached the vital parts, but the noise of the drums and the shouts of the spectators were such that her shrieks, if she uttered any, could not have been heard.

There is one inconvenience which all travellers in India have to put up with, namely, the bad accommodation that they receive on the road, and those who are accustomed to the

cheerful comforts of an inn in our own country, will find a sad difference in travelling through India; where, though at the distance of every eight or ten miles, the traveller will scarcely fail of meeting with a resting place, (as it is called) this seldom affords him more than a fountain of water, where he can quench his thirst, and, perhaps, a tent, or some kind of awning under which he can lie down to rest himself a while; for, as the greater part of the inhabitants of India, from a simplicity of life, and the mildness of the climate, have but few superfluous wants, a slight defence against the sun and rain, and a small portion of clothing, with plain food, are almost all that is necessary to their comforts. It is true our traveller had to submit to many privations, but the public duty he was performing, spared him a great number to which he must otherwise inevitably have submitted.

It was in Allahabad, the first town of note after quitting Benares, from which it is distant, westward, 260 miles, or above 800 miles from the mouth of the Ganges, in north lat. 25½° and east long. 82°, that Captain Blisset waited on a native Prince, who resides there in a splendid palace, built on a rising ground, which overhangs the town; it contains six large courts, the first of which is allotted to the nabob's carriages and attendants; the others, for the most part, are state apartments for himself and his *household*, and here he lives in solitude and *grandeur*: in front of one of the courts runs a

long colonnade, which is provided with curtains woven of sweet scented grass; here the nabob generally sleeps during the summer heat; and, during his hours of rest, his attendants sprinkle the curtains, from time to time, with water, which causes them to throw out the most cooling and refreshing odour. The roof of the palace is surmounted with four cupolas at the corners, and one at the principal front, which, being gilt, shone splendidly in the sunshine. The gardens belonging to the palace are extensive and beautiful; and they abound, not only in the finest flowers, but also with a number of birds, particularly pigeons, the lustre of whose plumage surpasses any thing that can be conceived.

During both day and night, elephants, camels and horses well accoutred, with palanquins, guards, and all sorts of attendants, ready attired remain in constant waiting before the gates of the palace, and the gayest pleasure-boats and barges are always in readines at the river side.

Besides all this, the nabob has for his amusement, a large collection of wild beasts—lions and tigers, panthers, leopards and wild asses of the mountains, Barbary goats, which resemble small deer, and a great variety of serpents; these are all kept in a place of security adjoining the palace, and are well fed and taken great care of.

One of his principal amusements is hunting; and this Captain Blisset had an opportunity of witnessing the day after his arrival at *Allahabad*.

The Nabob of Oude, as he is called, exclusive of his usual suite, was attended by a considerable body of cavalry, besides several officers of his army and household; some riding in palanquins, others mounted on camels, elephants and horses: a large multitude followed on foot, besides a long train of hunters, armed with spears, bows and arrows. The whole company could not amount to less than several thousand people. The nabob was sometimes carried in a palanquin by eight men, his shield, sword, gun, bow and quiver lying beside him; at other times he mounted on horseback; and, where the grass or bushes were high, he rode upon an elephant; greyhounds, hawks and cheetars (a beautiful species of panther, which had been domesticated and trained to the chase) were provided for the occasion; and, as soon as they reached the retreats of the game, the hunters formed themselves into one extensive line, and advancing gradually, roused all the game within the space they occupied.

The country round was very beautiful, and afforded a rich scenery of mountains, woods, lakes and verdant plains, and the sport commenced by letting fly the hawks at the hares, partridges and wild fowl, that they had already sprung. The falcon, on being let go, rises high in the air, poises himself, hovers for a while, then darts down on his prey, and never is known to miss his aim. This was the first part of the sport. But the most interesting part of the chase was yet to come. The panther is well known as

determined enemy to the antelope, and a wild open heath had been previously stocked with the latter animal. By the nabob's orders, horsemen, elephants, oxen, &c. had daily frequented the heath, in order to familiarize the antelopes, and the men were all ordered to wear a scarlet hunting dress, in order that, on the day of the chase, there might be nothing in their appearance that might intimidate their prey.

On this occasion several panthers were conveyed hood-winked to the heath, in an inferior kind of palanquin, the antelopes accustomed to the appearance of men and horses, soon came forward, and when they had reached within a few yards of them, the hunters suddenly threw open the covering of the palanquins, and drawing the blind from off the panthers eyes, each of them immediately espied his prey; and, darting forwards, seized on the poor unsuspecting animal and immediately destroyed it. There is no small danger attached to this part of the diversion, because, if the panther misses his prey, he is apt to vent his fury on the spectators.

In all sports of this kind there is more or less cruelty; but it would appear more particularly so in this, where, as William himself expressed it, they first enticed a poor animal into confidence and familiarity, and having got it by this means into their power, deliberately destroyed it; "and this," said he, "they call *hunting*, which is no hunting at all but absolute butchery."

After a short stay at Allahabad, they pursued their journey, and quitting the course of the Ganges, which here branches off to the northwards, they crossed the Jumma, and travelled along its southern bank, until they reached the town of Agra, situated in E. long. 77°, and N. lat. 27°. This city has fallen so much into decay, as to possess but little to interest a stranger, except a magnificent building erected by an ancient Indian Prince, a little to the east of the town, to the memory of his wife. It stands on the river side, but no description almost could give an idea of the beauty of the building.—It is in the form of a temple, and is composed entirely of white and coloured marbles. From the roof rises a dome of stupendous height, which is surmounted by a large gilt ball; and on top of this is placed a second ball, a size smaller: from this there rises a tall spear, placed upright, and on the point of it is fixed a crescent, which, from its great height, appears very small: it was curious to remark that this great mass of building, which, in the Indian language, is named the crown of edifices, covers several acres of ground, was twenty years in building, and cost a million of money, is terminated at top in what appears little more than like a speck in the sky.

Although, occasionally, their journey afforded them objects of interest, such as this, yet, for the most part, there was a great deal of sameness in it; the villages were all alike; and, through the country, their road lay either across wide open plains, or through thick woods, such as

are called jungles. The bamboo, of which these jungles are chiefly formed, not only affords shelter for wild beasts, but also for a great variety of the monkey tribe. It grows to a prodigious length and is useful for many purposes. Boats are very frequently made of it, and the natives are partial to it for this use, as the timber is so light that they can with ease carry their boats from one stream to another, even though they be of such a size as to be capable of containing five-and-twenty men at least. This timber is esteemed useful for various other purposes: the planks of it serve for erecting wooden houses, and the joints of the stem are used as pitchers to carry water, and some of them are so large as to be capable of containing sufficient to supply a whole family for a day.

The Hindoo peasants are very poor, and enjoy but little of the fruit of their labour, being allowed only a certain portion of their harvest, from the proprietor of the soil, and, on this they have to maintain their families, to provide and keep their cattle, and to furnish themselves with seed for the ensuing year.

The peasants are an extremely sober race of people, and so temperate, that they eat only twice in the day, morning and evening. They prepare their food in earthen pots, and use broad leaves, generally of the palm or plaintain sewed together, with a blade of dry grass, instead of plates and dishes. Forks and spoons are quite unknown amongst them; they take up their food with the fingers of the right hand, and are

scrupulously exact in washing, both before and after meals.

The province of Delhi, through which they were now travelling, in their course westward, was formerly a kingdom of considerable extent, but from the encroachments of numerous invaders, its boundaries are confined within narrow limits. It is situated between 28° and 31° N. lat. Indeed, there is no country in which the natural fertility of the soil would better repay the labour of the husbandman with a rich harvest of wheat, rice, millet, sugar, indigo, and fruits of various kinds; but such are the dreadful consequences of the repeated wars, in which the Great Mogul was engaged, until, in 1804, he placed himself under the protection of the British, that the lands are in many places lying waste, and even the people are become turbulent, and fond of rapine.

The chief town, bearing the name of Delhi, was once a celebrated city, though now fallen so much into decay as to present a most desolate appearance. It is said, formerly, to have covered a space of twenty miles in length; at present, however, it is only seven miles in circumference, and is surrounded by a wall, having seven gates, with high arched gateways of stone; the outskirts of the town are crowded with the remains of gardens and country houses, *formerly* belonging to the nobility, and within *the city* are the ruins of several splendid *palaces.*

The garden called Shah-al-Iman, for example, is said to have cost a million sterling. It was surrounded by a high wall, and contained every luxury of the East, and the prospect from its lofty buildings, must have been beautiful, as it embraced numbers of beautiful pavilions, mosques, and mausoleums, with their gilded roofs appearing from amidst cypress and other groves, through which the rivers and canals bent their course.

Delhi like all other eastern towns possessed extensive public baths. In such warm climates bathing is esteemed one of the highest luxuries, and the baths are usually fitted up with great neatness, lined with white marble, and abundantly supplied with water. It is true these baths still remain, but only to remind the traveller of what Delhi formerly was, for the greater number are in ruins; nor could Captain Blisset avoid inculcating upon William the lesson which it taught them. You have here, said he, a proof of the mischiefs of civil war. You see, also, that whichever side may be victorious, the evils it produces fall equally upon all, for if you call to memory the country through which we have passed, you must have remarked the appearances of famine, wretchedness, and decay, which were visible on all sides.

The province of Delhi is now for the most part, in the possession of the English; all that territory which lies to the eastward of the river Jumma, with a considerable district round it

city, belongs to them; but its revenues are allotted to support the family and establishment of the Emperor, (or Great Mogul) as he is called, now reduced to the humiliating state of dependance on a foreign power.

In Delhi our travellers found an English resident attached to the court, and a large number of troops, to keep the surrounding country in tranquillity; and as the mission with which Captain Blisset was charged introduced him at once to his countryman, he resolved to stop for a short time in a place where he met with so much kindness. It was necessary, also, for another reason, that he should delay his journey a few days; for as he was now leaving those parts of India where the British authority prevails, and about to enter upon a more dangerous part of his route, it behoved him to procure a more numerous escort, and to make provision for the desert country through which he was about to pass. A very short time had elapsed since the British had been established in Delhi, and yet it surprised our travellers not a little to find how much European customs were adopted; or, rather, imitated in these remote countries, particularly with respect to the establishment of posts, which are extremely well regulated throughout all those parts of India that are subject to the British power, as the city and the greater part of the province of Delhi is. The letter-carriers travel on foot, and each goes a stage of seven or eight miles, by which means letters are conveyed to the

distance of seventy miles in twenty-four hours. Captain Blisset had heard a great deal of the splendour in which the royal family lived at Delhi, and, through the English resident, was enabled to visit the royal palace, but the distressed state of the country had destroyed a great deal of that magnificence. The peacock throne (as it was called) has been celebrated by almost every traveller, who has visited this quarter of the world. But Captain Blisset found that it had been taken to pieces and sold. It was in form somewhat like a tent bed, and nearly of the same size. The under part of the canopy, which was of crimson velvet, was embroidered with pearls and diamonds, and had a fringe of pearls round the edge; upon the top of the canopy stood a peacock with its tail spread, which was composed of sapphire and other gems, adapted to represent the natural colours of the feathers. The body was of gold, set closely with jewels, and a large ruby adorned his breast, to which was hung a pearl of prodigious size. On each side of the peacock were placed two golden nosegays; the twelve pillars that supported the canopy were beset with rows of fine pearl, and, to complete the whole, when the king was seated on the throne, a transparent jewel, with a diamond hanging to it, was suspended in such a manner that it was constantly before his eyes. This magnificent throne is reported to have cost six hundred and eighty-seven thousand pounds *sterling!*

Obliged, from the duty with which he was charged, not to delay unnecessarily, or to depart too much from the direct line of his route to Caubul, Captain Blisset regretted much it was not in his power to extend his tour northward into the country called Nepaul, which stretches north of Delhi. At Delhi he was fortunate enough, however, to meet a gentleman who had been attached to the embassy sent into Nepaul in the year 1808, and from him he received all the information he required.

The kingdom of Nepaul is bounded north by the great range of the Himalaya mountains, south by the provinces of Bahar, Oude, and Delhi: its extent from north to south, being about 200 miles, and from east to west, 800 miles.

He described the country as extremely mountainous, and intersected with numerous rivers; and that the travelling in a palanquin, which is the only mode of conveyance practicable, was not unattended with danger; for the roads are cut in the sides of the mountains, and often seem literally to hang over the deep wide precipices that yawn beneath; besides which, they are, in many parts, so slippery, from the heat of the sun, as to render the footing of the palanquin-bearers quite unsafe. In some places, indeed, even the palanquin must be laid aside, as too burdensome a load for the steep ascents; and here both travellers and baggage must be carried by persons called hill-porters, a race of people belonging to the

poorest order of the peasantry, who earn a precarious livelihood by taking up their abode in the wildest and most inaccessible parts of these mountains, and attending upon the few travellers who may chance to pass that way. Here and there, villages are to be seen perched on the sides of the mountains; and low down in the valley were fishermen's huts scattered along the banks of such of the streams as abound in fish. Their manner of fishing also deserves to be mentioned. The channel of the river is first intersected by seven or eight nets, united together by being hooked at their extremities to poles or sticks, erected in the water for the purpose. To each net there is a man or boy, who has a second net tied round his waist, into which he puts the fish as fast as he catches them. This he does by diving head-foremost, though the water is not deeper than the middle, throwing up the feet nearly quite erect, and seizing the fish, sometimes between his teeth, but, most commonly, in his hands.

In some parts the sides of the mountains are covered with tall forests, chiefly composed of the pine tree, which here grows to a great size, and is so resinous that its branches serve for torches; nor is it any thing unusual for these trees to be found with the resin hanging from the stem and boughs like large icicles. Indeed, all the various trees that abound in these forests are serviceable, in some way or other, to the natives. The pith of one kind, in times of scarcity, supplies the poorer classes with an

inferior sort of bread; the leaves of another are used as spice; the bark of its root has a flavour resembling cinnamon; the bark of a third is made into ropes and cordage; some bear blossoms of the liveliest colours, succeeded by refreshing fruits; the wood of some is serviceable in dyeing; others have medicinal qualities. Thus we see how Providence provides for man, and that there is no region, however remote—no people, however uncivilized, but their wants are provided for. *His watchful eye is over all.*

It is surprising to see how much cultivation has extended over the lofty mountains of this kingdom. In some of those, which are not encumbered with forest, the corn fields can be traced, even to the very summit. Wild and uncivilized as the Nepaulese are, they are yet industrious, and industry will conquer even the most barren and stubborn land.

It may seem singular to the reader that they should be able to cultivate the sides of a steep mountain, even to the top, but his surprise will cease when he hears the simple contrivance by which this is effected. With indefatigable labour, the industrious husbandman builds a succession of strong walls, at different heights upon the declivity, and filling up with soil the interval between every two, the whole forms, as it were, a succession of levels, each adapted for the culture of those seeds which require that the water should rest on the ground—such as rice, and many others peculiar to the country.

Agriculture is the principal occupation of the Nepaulese peasantry, but some of the most useful arts are likewise practiced among them; such as weaving coarse cloth, and working in iron, copper, and in brass. Upon the whole, they are a peaceable, industrious, and ingenious people, and distinguished also for their gentleness and simplicity of manners.

There are several villages and towns throughout the kingdom of Nepaul; of these the town of Khatmandu is considered as the capital city, entitled to this distinction, not so much from its superiority in size, as from its being the residence of the King, or Rajah, as he is called. This city stands on the eastern bank of a small river, called the Bishmutty, along which it stretches about a mile. The streets are narrow and dirty in the extreme, and the public buildings unworthy of notice, except for the splendid gilding that adorns the roofs and spires of the temples.

Setting out now from Delhi on their further progress westward, the manner in which Captain Blisset and William travelled was very different from what it had been previous to their arrival at it. They had camels to carry water and provisions, and two elephants to ride upon, besides which their escort consisted of fifty sepoys; and as every one, whose business led him in the same direction, was glad to avail himself of the protection which this occasion afforded, their caravan soon consisted of 200 camels and six elephants.

For the first hundred miles the road presented nothing remarkable: they frequently met with plundering bands of the natives, but they were too strong to fear them. This distance, however, once passed, they came to sand-hills, covered with bushes, but these were afterwards succeeded by naked piles of loose sand, rising one after another, like the waves of the sea: there were roads through them made solid by the treading of animals, but off the road, the camels sunk into the sand above the knee: and yet it is in the midst of this parched desert, in which no traces either of water or vegetation are to be found, that the water-melon, the most juicy of fruits, is found in profusion. Indeed, it was impossible to see melons *three and four feet* in circumference, growing from a stalk as slender as that of a common melon, in the dry sand of the desert, without admiring the goodness of Providence: for many a traveller obliged to cross these plains, and having no camel to expedite his journey, would perish but for the seasonable and refreshing supply which this fruit affords him.

It was now, in fact, that our travellers began to experience the hardships of journeying, through these barren and sultry regions. The march was seldom longer than sixteen miles, and, from the heat of the weather it took place *always at night*: but the fatigues they had to *endure* were not to be measured by the distance *they went*. The path by which they travelled *was too* narrow to allow of two camels goi

abreast, so that the line was above a mile long, and, as it was necessary that they should keep together, a trumpet was sounded, whenever any obstruction occurred, which caused them all to halt until it was surmounted; the want of water also began to be felt; and as the men could not be prevented from the excessive use of the water melons, no less than twenty were seized with a complaint, called dysentery, which, in a short time, carried off eleven of the number. Our two travellers, however, did not suffer any serious illness, though they were seized with inflammation in the eye-lids, which lasted until their arrival at Lahore; the capital of this extensive province.

The province of Lahore, of which the town of the same name is the capital, lies between thirty and thirty-four degrees of N. lat. and is estimated at 320 miles in length by 220 in breadth, forming the western boundary of the kingdom of Delhi, which our travellers had just left. The city was formerly the capital of Hindostan, and, in 1609, was no less than twelve miles in length, surrounded by a fortification having twelve gates. The walls and ceilings of the palace were covered with gold and silver, and the royal gardens superior to any thing of the kind in Europe. Of all this grandeur, little now remains except some handsome tombs; and it will give the young reader some idea of the turbulent spirit of the people, that no manufactures, except of warlike instruments are encouraged.

At Lahore, however, Captain Blisset and William, whom he now, indeed, began to treat more as a friend than an inferior, soon informed themselves of the country of Cashmere, which lay to the north of them; and which they would have felt the strongest desire to visit, if, besides lying out of their road, it were not to be approached on foot, or else necessary to be carried thither by men; the mountain passes being impracticable either for horses, camels or elephants.

The following is the brief description which Captain Blisset obtained concerning it, from an intelligent native merchant, with whom he made acquaintance, and who, having often occasion to travel to the British possessions in India, spoke the English language with fluency.

Cashmere, or, (as it is usually called) the valley of Cashmere, is an extensive province of India, nearly one hundred miles in length, and surrounded with high mountains, which enclose it in on every side. The soil is fertile, and watered with innumerable streams, which flow down the mountains, and serve to supply the several lakes that are situated in the valley. This beautiful vale, the happy valley, as it is called, was formerly the summer retreat of the Emperors of Hindostan, during the hot months of the year. From its elevated situation, the climate is delightful, and, what is most singular, it abounds in the various fruits and flowers of both northern and southern regions; for, upon the mountain tops, the plants even of Ireland

will grow, and the richest fruits of the tropical climates flourish down in the valley.

The inhabitants of Cashmere keep themselves quite distinct from the neighbouring Indian provinces, holding no intercourse with them but what their commerce requires; indeed, so enclosed by mountains are they, that, in all this range which, to encompass the whole valley, must be between three and four hundred miles in extent, they have but seven openings, through which they can pass into any of the adjacent territories, four of wh' h are from the south and east, two from the north, and one from the west.

But the most remarkable production of Cashmere, and that which most engaged our travellers attention, is its shawls, which supply the whole civilized world, and are said to be manufactured at sixteen thousand looms, each of which gives employment to two or three men, according to the pattern wrought in the shawl. The work is almost inconceivably tedious; of the best kind, perhaps not more than a quarter of an inch will be completed in one day; and it is not unusual to find a loom occupied with one shawl for an entire year; while the most that any of them make, is five, six or eight, according to their size or quality, and this shews the necessity of employing so many thousand looms. The head workman superintends the manufacture, and, if the men have any new pattern in hand, with which they are not familiar, he describes to them the figures, colours and threads

which they are to use, keeping before him the pattern on which they are employed, drawn upon paper. The wages of the workmen varies from about three half-pence to six pence per day of our money, and the superintendent himself has not more than eighteen pence or two shillings.

The wool of which the shawls are made is the inner coat of the goats hair; the outer hair of that animal is long and coarse, and is used only for weaving thick blanketing. These goats are only found in Tibet, a part of Asia lying north-eastward of that through which our travellers were now passing, and the Cashmere merchants import it from thence at an expense of twelve rupees, or about £1. 8s. of our money, for a package of twelve pounds weight. It is naturally of a dark grey colour, but it is bleached and dressed with rice flour before it is worn.

The average number of shawls manufactured annually, in Cashmere, is eighty thousand. The principal town of this province, and which bears the same name, is situated on the river Jhelum, over which it has three wooden bridges, and the houses are built with flat roofs, covered over with a thick bed of mould, and planted with flowers, which, in the summer season, presents the most lively appearance.

The mode of conveying goods through the passes in the mountains is on men's shoulders, the road being quite impracticable for cattle, as we have already mentioned.

From Lahore our travellers now pursued their journey, taking their road in a westerly direc-

tion, to the adjoining kingdom of Caubul, or Afghauniston, as it is more properly called; Caubul which our travellers were anxious to reach, is only the name of its capital city. But, in order the better to understand the respective situations of these countries, it will here be necessary to give a short geographical description of them:—

If we traverse the adjoining kingdoms of Hindostan* and Afghauniston, from Bengal, which is situated on the eastern coast of Hindostan, across to the city of Herat, on the borders of Persia, we shall find them every where bounded, on the north, by one continuous chain of mountains, which is covered with perpetual snow for almost the whole of that extent, and from which all the great rivers of these countries appear to issue.

This range of mountains, from its most eastern extremity, on to Cashmere, is called the Himalaya mountains, and from thence as far as the high snowy peak of Hindoo Coosh, which rises near Herat, the whole of the rest of the chain is designated by the name of that peak, Hindoo Coosh. The kingdom of Afghauniston is bounded, on the north by the mountains of Hindoo Coosh, on the east by the river Indus, on the west lies an extensive tract of barren land, called the Salt Desert, and its southern

* Under the general name of Hindostan are included all the countries, hitherto described on our traveller's route from Calcutta, westward, to Lahor; Afghauniston lies between Hindostan and Persia.

boundary may be said to be the Persian Gulf. It lies between twenty-nine and thirty-six degrees of north lat. and sixty-one and seventy-one degrees of east longitude.

For a country of such extent, Afghauniston possesses few large rivers, and it may be observed of all the rivers of this kingdom, that their size at the mouth is never equal to the rapidity and strength of their current near the source, a peculiarity which is at once accounted for by the mountainous country in which they rise, and the level plains into which, in their course, they afterwards flow.

The Indus, however, from the length of its course, and the volume of water which it carries to the ocean, may be reckoned among the great rivers in the world. The distance, from its source, in the Himalaya mountains, to where it falls into the sea, has never yet been exactly ascertained; but it has been traced one thousand three hundred and fifty miles; nor can a greater proof be given of its magnitude than that many of the smaller rivers, which fall into it, and which, in comparison, appear but as inconsiderable streams, are as large, and even larger, than some of our principal rivers in Europe; three of them, the Hydaspes, the Hydraotes, and the Hysudrus, being superior to the Rhone, and another being forty miles longer than the Elbe, while even the most inconsiderable of them is, *at least*, equal to the Shannon.

Amongst the Afghauns, the poorer sort of *the people* dwell in tents, and are, for the most

part, shepherds and herdsmen; they live sociably among themselves, and meet, to feast together, in parties of five or six, as often as they can afford to kill a sheep; they dine on boiled mutton, and the broth, in which the meat is dressed, serves them for soup, taking butter-milk, as their drink, after dinner, or sometimes, they have a liquor, made from sheep's milk, which is said to be somewhat intoxicating. During dinner, the master recommends his dishes, presses his guests to eat, and tells them not to spare, for there is plenty. They say grace before and after dinner, and, when all is done, the guests bless the master of the house, and, having sat a while to smoke, tell stories, and sing their songs, they depart.

It would be pleasing if we could praise the honesty of the Afghauns as much as their hospitality; but the fact is, that the very man to whom they would not refuse a favor if asked, they would make no scruple of robbing, if they met him by chance. Do you think, William, said Captain Blisset, that their kindness to the needy makes them less guilty as robbers? No, truly, Sir, answered he, I believe that the conduct must be of a-piece, nor do I think that one good action can palliate another bad one; I recollect to have heard of thieves who would give some of what they stole from the rich to a poor man, if they met him; but I never can be persuaded that this lessens their crime. You are right, William, said Captain Blisset, and

hope you will ever be of the same opinion: if we would do our duty, we must keep *all* the commandments.

The fourth day after Captain Blisset quitted Lahore to go westward to Caubul, he came up with a caravan, which gave him a good idea of the manner in which the commerce of these countries is carried on. The roads, he found, were not suited for wheel carriages, and, as the rivers, although navigable, had not yet been applied to the purposes of inland traffic, all goods were transported on beasts of burthen, and camels were found most useful for this purpose, as well for their strength, as the ease with which they are fed on every kind of bush, and, almost, on every kind of vegetable. Long before our travellers overtook the caravan, they could see it winding its way along the road, one confused mass of men and women, horses and camels. The pace at which it moved enabled them soon to have a nearer view of it, and, in a short time after, they came up with it. Almost every man had his wife and family, who rode upon horses or ponies, or were carried in an inferior kind of palanquin; the number of laden camels almost surpassed computation; and one man, whom they called Caufila Banshee, or head of the caravan, had the direction of the whole, and had appointed eighty men under him, who were empowered to maintain order *and regularity* amongst the whole company. It *was his business* also to fix on the places of en*campment*, and (which was not the least difficult

part of his duty) to adjust all terms with the tribes through whose lands they had to pass.

In due time our travellers reached Caubul, their place of destination. Here it was curious to witness the dispersion that almost immediately took place, amongst those who had joined them along the road way, each betaking himself, without further ceremony, to his own road. Our travellers, with their escort, entered the town, and were immediately provided with suitable accommodation by the English resident, to whom Captain Blisset delivered his dispatches.

And here they determined to rest for some days, as well to inform themselves of every thing remarkable in Afghauniston, as to recover their followers from the fatigues they had endured on the journey. Nor could they have chosen a better situation for this purpose.

The climate of Afghauniston is dry, and little subject to rain or fogs. A pestilential wind, however, called the Simoom, is known in some parts of the country, distant from Caubul, and so fatal are its effects, that people have been known to fall senseless, and expire, almost immediately after being exposed to it. Its approach is, however, ascertained by a particular smell in the air, which gives warning to those abroad to hasten under shelter until the blast has passed over, which it does in strong gusts of wind in a few minutes. The great difference between the seasons, and the sudden-

ately the light cotton dress is exchanged for the warm sheep-skin and woollen garments. They light their fires, and those who live in dwelling-houses generally sleep round stoves, covering themselves with large sheep-skins, which are likewise extended up over the stove so as to confine the heat. When the winter season is once past, the snow suddenly disappears, the country is covered with young grass, the buds burst forth, and are soon followed by a profusion of flowers; the inhabitants leave their towns and spread over the country; the sheep-skin is exchanged for the light cotton dress, and they often sleep at night under trees, or in the open air.

It often occurred to Captain Blisset that, could a man be transported at once from England or Ireland to Afghauniston, without passing through any of the intermediate countries, he would be amazed at the wide and unfrequented deserts, unmarked by enclosures, unembellished by trees, and destitute of navigable canals, public roads, and all the great productions of human industry. He would find the towns few, and distant from each other; and he would look in vain for inns and other conveniences, such as he was accustomed to in his own country. Yet, he would sometimes be delighted with the fertility and populousness of particular plains and valleys, where he would see the productions of Europe mingled with those of Asia, and the land cultivated with industry and judment.—He would see the inh

bitants following their flocks, and living in tents and villages, and would be struck with sun-burnt countenances, long beards, loose garments, and shaggy mantles of sheep-skin.

Of their capital city Caubul which stands in latitude 34, north, and longitude 68, east, there is little to be said. It is surrounded by a brick wall, with towers at the angles, the houses, which are built of rough stones and clay, making but a mean appearance. There are, however, four good bazars, or market places, where, as in other Indian towns, all the trade of the place is carried on. This is considerable, for persons of almost every country of the east are there to be met with. A number of horses are brought thither from Tartary and those find their way even to Calcutta: the East India Company employing an agent there to purchase those which it annually requires for its mounted troops. A number of these were now about to set out for Bombay, and as the country through which they were to pass was wild, and in some places infested with robbers, a large escort was engaged to protect them, and with this party Captain Blisset resolved to travel; nor shall we wonder at this determination if we consider his situation: to the west lay Persia; but the road to it from Caubul lay through a wild and desert country, and could only be traversed by mules and camels. In this manner, indeed, he might have reached the city of Herat, which stands on the borders of the two kingdoms of Caubul and Persia

but beyond that lay that vast tract called the salt desert, from some salt springs which are found there, which must be crossed before you can reach the inhabited parts of the kingdom of Persia. On the other hand, accompanying the escort, he would traverse the whole tract of country which is fertilized by the Indus in its passage to the Arabian sea, from north to south, and once arrived at Bombay, could shape his course afterwards according to circumstances.

This plan once resolved on, our travellers in a few days after put it into execution. For the first fortnight their course, which was south easterly, led them through a country very like that which they had traversed on the way to Caubul. The district was called Candahan, the southern province of Afghaunistan, and contains very few towns; the natives preferring to move about, from place to place, to procure pasture for their numerous flocks of sheep, and herds of camels. Our travellers, on one occasion, lighted upon an encampment of one of these tribes, and found the tents pitched in two lines, in the centre of which, was that of the chief, each being composed of black woollen cloth, 25 feet long, and 12 broad, supported by three poles, and divided in the middle by a curtain. To the west of the camp a small space was marked out with stones, which served for a mosque, and at a little distance was a large tent, pitched for the reception of strangers, hospitality being highly esteemed among them.